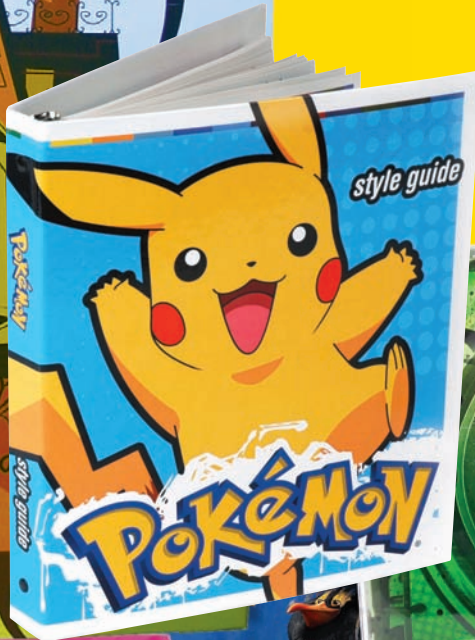


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# 14

KidsCo to take on studio nets overseas



# 18

Style guide freedom yields toy innovation



# 24

Kids get wild with toon icons at the zoo



# 25

JAM Media does Facebook for kids

# may 07

## Special Reports

### 26 KIDS UPFRONT 2007

Selling Screen to Screen: Kidnets integrate their online content to bridge the digital gap and create wider-reaching advertising solutions for a new cadre of non-endemic clients.



#### Cover

This month's editorial cover features a collection of leading industry style guides (©2007 Pokémon, ©1995-2007 Nintendo/Creatures Inc./GAME FREAK inc. TM and ® are trademarks of Nintendo). International copies sport an ad for Decode series *Bo on the Go*.

#### Oops!

In the January 2007 issue's Sales Roundup chart (page 25), we mistakenly reported that Cartoon Network Latin America had bought *Code Lyoko* from Taffy Entertainment, when in fact it was Jetix Latin America that picked the series up. *KidScreen* regrets the error.

In "Little League takes a swing at catalogue sales" on page 48 of the February/March 2007 issue, we reported that Avon's brochure circ was 60 million instead of 16 million.

## Highlights from this issue

### 11 up front

Singapore seeks to grow its animation sector

### 14 ppd

KidsCo caters to indies to build its launch sked

### 18 licensing

How to make your style guide look good and work harder

### 22 retail

Hot Topic cranks up its music biz with podcasts and music industry hire

### 24 marketing

Kidnets partner with zoos to extend brands with wee animal lovers

### 25 digital bytes

JAM Media ages down the social networking craze with Picme web hub

### 47 coolwatch

Kids give us the lowdown on their many virtual pet addictions

## back of the book

43 People Page

44 Contact File

45 Calendar



## Online safety 2.0

**G**iven the rampant spread of addiction to social networking sites amongst adults these days, you had to know it was just a matter of time before someone took a stab at versioning the online trend for kids. It may not catch on with JAM Media's target for MyPicme (featured on page 25), since the social drive of preschoolers is pretty embryonic. But I'm of the opinion that these apps have a tremendous amount of potential for older kids ages eight and up.

Think about it for a second. What other demographic puts more value on their friend groups than school-age kids? They live and die by who they hang out with and whether they're in on the next cool thing. And they already seem to champion the social functionality offered up by every other type of media in their lives (text-messaging anyone?). I'm telling you, there's a gold mine out there just waiting to be tapped by someone who's willing to take on the challenge of launching a Facebook or MySpace for core kids.

And it will be a challenge—because as much as kids would decode the inner workings of a service like this in a flash, the same can't be said for many parents, who are caught between a rock and a hard place when it comes to online monitoring. On the one hand, they know they have to keep tabs on who their kids are associating with on the web, but on the other, they don't have time to learn enough about every application their kids are using. And that leads to situations that can be pretty comical on the surface.

The latest parental uproar centers around Tom, a 31-year-old guy suspected of stalking teenagers on MySpace (as well as kids who've lied about their age to sign up). His MO is that he looks for new accounts and then asks to be a friend of the kids behind them. And he seems to be a very active predator, too, given that he has more than 174 million "friends" to date!

Now anyone who maintains a MySpace page will be chuckling at this point because, as they well know, "Tom" is simply a default friend created by MySpace to start off a new user's social circle. We can laugh about this, but the root problem is far from funny, especially for anyone thinking about tackling social networking for kids. Parents aren't going to let their children sign up to a service like this unless they feel they can have some control over it. So the question becomes, how do you provide parents with a way to do their job (keeping their kids safe from harm) in a medium they don't understand and don't have time to master? And how do you do it without taking away the freedom kids are going to want from the experience?

Walking this tightrope is going to involve some very creative approaches to web construction, and a hefty amount of R&D, which is probably why no one has stepped up to the plate yet. But MTV Networks is currently looking for a senior director of social media product development, so I'm sure it won't be long before someone puts forth a pioneering effort. Can't wait to see how they do it.

—jocelyn

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### The Retail Org Chart



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**kidscreen**  
May 2007 • Volume 12, Issue 4

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**O**ur feature article on style guide design in this month's licensing section has been a favorite of ours that we've been thinking of for some months now. What excited me most about this particular piece is the wonderful group of talented and creative execs that we were introduced to. We travel a lot to different kids' business events on the international circuit and meet a lot of fantastic individuals that we are proud to know as colleagues and friends. Who we don't meet enough are the passionate and dedicated folks operating behind the scenes who play an integral role in the backbone of this industry. We salute you and want to get to know you better. Please don't be shy to drop a line to say hi, tell us what you're working on and the issues that keep you up at night.

Is there someone that you think *KidScreen* should know? I invite you to send us your recommendations for hot talent, top service providers, and cool folks that may not be on our radar yet. Send your tips to me at [dmacneil@brunico.com](mailto:dmacneil@brunico.com). The *KidScreen* community is broad, dynamic and always inviting! Watch in our November/December issue for a special feature on the next gen leaders of kids' entertainment.

This month we're hosting our new **KidScreen West** conference event in Santa Monica (May 14-15, 2007, Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel). We've put together a great line-up of speakers and topics that address issues on how to meet the market challenges in licensing, consumer products and marketing. This intimate, practical information based event takes us back to our modest **KidScreen Summit** roots, and we hope that the event will be useful in providing ideas and tips for reaching audiences and retailers more effectively.

Thanks go out to our presenting sponsor Ty's Toy Box for helping to make this event happen, and to our all-star speakers for their hard work and enthusiasm in putting together the program: Jon Berrett, Gary Caplan, Stan Clutton, Jim Davey, Chris DeMoulin, Fred Fierst, Greg Fountain, Anita Frazier, Kelly Gilmore, Lynn Godfrey, Mary Goss Robino, Eddie Hayden, Debra Joester, Tim Kilpin, Warren Kornblum, Bruce Maguire, Jay May, Bobbi Merkel, Patrick Meyer, Christina Miller, Bruce Morrison, Gary Pope, Cynthia Rapp, Holly Rawlinson, Reyne Rice, Genna Rosenberg, Elliot Rudell, Travis Rutherford, Melissa Segal, Ty Simpson, Stephen Stanley, Terry Stanley, Joy Tashjian, and George Whalin.

Next up in the magazine we've got our annual Licensing Show report in June (Ad Material deadline: May 25 Street Date: June 8) and in July/August, our semi-annual hit Radarscreen on upcoming features and their accompanying licensing and promo ops (Ad Material deadline: July 12 Street Date: July 27).

*Enjoy the issue...and keep reading KidScreen Daily!*

**Donna MacNeil**  
VP and Group Publisher  
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Singapore's ST Electronics and Nelvana have paired up for a multi-project slate that includes new CGI series *The Future is Wild*, slated to bow on Discovery Kids in the fall

# SINGAPORE HITS ITS STRIDE WITH INTERNATIONAL CO-PROS

by lana castleman

**U**nder the banner of Singapore Media Fusion, the country's Media Development Authority (MDA) brought its largest contingent yet (21 prodcos) to MIPTV last month. And while the government agency has been working towards turning the tiny island nation (whose total population is just 4.55 million) into a media production powerhouse for

about six years now, 2007 just might be a watershed year for animation in the region.

According to CEO Dr. Christopher Chia, the MDA is devoting about one-third of its co-investment funding to international Singaporean co-productions this year. The plan is to capitalize on the country's highly developed tech infrastructure and turn it into a creative production hub. In addition to animation, MDA has a hand in fostering film, factual TV and video game content. Chia estimates the production activity in these sectors should be contributing US\$6 billion to the region's economy by 2015.

To get there, the MDA has just announced that it's putting up part of the cash for a slate of content being co-produced by Singapore's ST Electronics and Nelvana. Along with new CGI series *The Future is Wild* and more eps of *Jane and the Dragon* (currently airing on Qubo in the US), two films and two direct-to-videos are in the offing. Chia estimates their market worth at around US\$100 million (including production budgets and ancillary sales), and expects the ST/Nelvana partnership to generate two more TV series, four theatrical films and eight more DTVs over the next 18 months.

Corus EVP and GM of kids Scott Dyer says the MDA is steadfast in its determination to build Singaporean companies that can compete on an international level. "And I've got to tell you," he adds, "it has the money to make it happen."

The projects on the joint slate are true 50/50 co-pros that will split distribution and ancillary rights down the middle, says Dyer. Animation and modeling is being completed in Singapore, while Nelvana takes care of scripting and post in Canada. "Singapore

"Singapore" continued on page 13

## Roll the Cartoon

by jim benton



"Well, I don't see anything in the style-guide that says that we *can't* do it."

Style guides are the linchpins of merch programs. Check out "Elements of Style" on page 18 for tips on how to make them look good and work harder.



# Siegel soldiers on

by jocelyn christie

**IF** you've ever collaborated with Corus Kids TV's director of original productions, Bonita Siegel, you know firsthand that she takes her work seriously and approaches projects with a no-nonsense determination that's somewhat militaristic. And some of you, especially those who attended the highly entertaining "Trading Places" session at KidScreen Summit this year, probably already know that she spent a couple of years serving in the Canadian Army Reserves in her 20s. But what you may not know is that she got in it for the guys and the cash, and stayed in it for the guns and the parties.

Siegel's sister, who spent most of her career in the army and only recently retired from active duty, was really the catalyst for the whole thing. While Siegel was studying communication arts at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Canada, she ran out of money one year and needed to find a job in a hurry. Her sister offered to put her to work on the army base doing administrative stuff, but Siegel had reservations because she wasn't really interested in enlisting. However, since the basic training course that all new recruits have to complete was already underway, the plan was that Siegel would sign up, do the work for her sister, and then withdraw her application before the next course started.

It would have worked, too, except an over-zealous officer rounded up all the recruits one night and announced that the army planned to fast-track their processing. So Siegel had to pack her



Joining the reserves for some extra cash landed Siegel in basic training

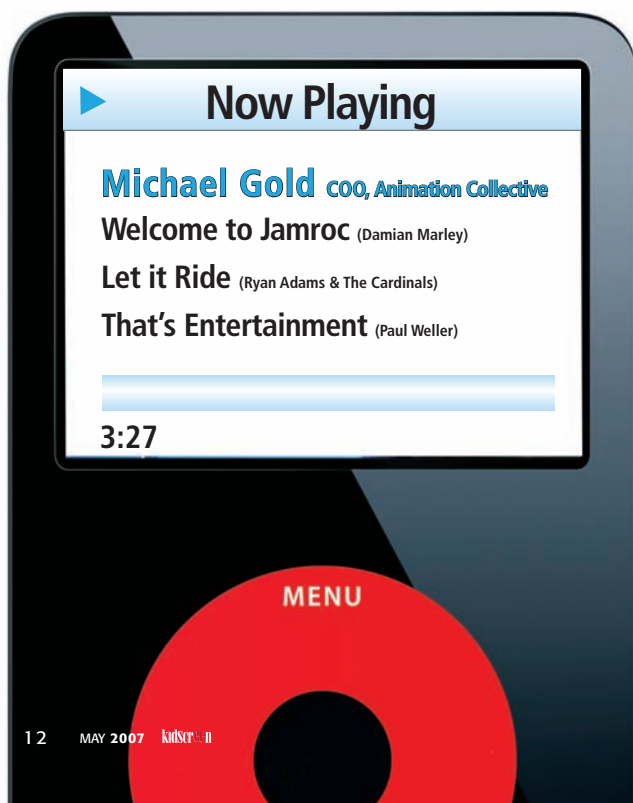
bags and ship out to join the very same basic training course she thought she'd so cleverly sidestepped.

It turned out to be a blessing in disguise, though, because she really enjoyed the experience. Sure, the rigid obsession with order and obedience seemed a little crazy, but Siegel met some really great people—and the male recruits, who were in superb physical condition, certainly weren't a drawback.

Once she'd completed her training, she joined the reserves in Hamilton and served in the mess for NCMs (non-commissioned members), where she organized social events. She was much enamored with a particular sergeant at the time, and conveniently, her sister was in charge of the social calendar for the officers' mess. So in cahoots once again, they worked on setting up a lot of pizza mixers that got the two groups together.

Besides the friends she made during her two years of service, Siegel's hands-down favorite thing about army life was target practice. Although it was quite difficult to hold the rifle in a prone position and squeeze off a shot that didn't go straight into the ground (Siegel is only 5'3" tall, after all), she enjoyed the challenge. And she had much better luck with machine guns, especially the Sten model, a rapid-fire weapon that you can shoot standing up.

So the next time you have to break the news that your delivery is going to be a little delayed, just remember that you're dealing with someone who's professionally trained for combat and who knows a thing or two about artillery. I'm just saying... it might be wise to try a delicate approach. **N**





# HOT TALENT

## Canuck Howie Shia takes Tokyo by storm

**IT** may have taken 10 months to painstakingly craft his seven-minute animated short *Flutter* in Photoshop (nope, not a typo), but for Howie Shia, the effort is paying off big-time. This past March, the young Toronto, Canada-based illustrator and artist became the first non-Japanese creator to win the Open Entries Grand Prix at the Tokyo Anime Fair. Not a bad showing, considering it was only his second work in the art form.

*Flutter*, a would-be urban fairytale about a boy and girl who realize they must abandon their friendship in order embrace their true callings, beat out 216 competitors hailing from 16 different countries. Shia says the idea germinated from a drawing of a boy with paper wings taped to his feet that he'd created while working with Canada's National Film Board on his first project, a 30-second short called *Ice Ages*. The NFB liked his work so much that along with Bravo! Fact (an arts fund hatched by specialty broadcaster Bravo!) and his own PPF House, it put *Flutter* into production.

And the Photoshop? "Nobody recommends it, but I wanted [*Flutter*] to look as hand-drawn and gritty as possible," says Shia, adding that as an untrained animator, he's "as close to being a Luddite as someone can be."

Moving forward, Shia expects he'll have to step up his tech knowledge. And along

with keeping PPF (which he co-owns with musician brothers Tim and Leo) in commercial design, video and music work, he's now developing a kids animated series and a children's picture book.

Shia hasn't pitched the series to potential co-pro partners or broadcasters yet, but he has been soliciting feedback from fellow animators working in Toronto. He envisions it as a 2-D animated show with an urban look and

The picture book is a bit further along. *Waiting for Giants* is a story about a young girl living in a small town who befriends an elderly puppeteer and helps him put on plays. The pair is charged with entertaining the townspeople at the Waiting for Giants event that takes place once every 10 years. Too young to remember the last event, the girl keeps wondering who the giants are and what it is, exactly, they do, and her curiosity drives the narrative.



Shia's *Flutter* is the first non-Japanese creation to take home the Tokyo Anime Open Entries prize

feel, focusing on a group of curious kids who explore the odder nooks and crannies of the world. "It's sort of like an *X-Files* for children that mixes sci-fi, fantasy and mythology from different cultures around the world."

As for the impact of winning the prestigious prize, Shia's pretty humble. "I've just started talking to animators and companies that I met at the Fair," he says. "I have many, many business cards to follow up." **LC**

### "Singapore" continued from page 11

has great technical talent in CG, Flash and 2-D," he notes. "But it doesn't have a strong creative base." However, an added bonus for Dyer's team is that English is the country's official language, so Nelvana's new co-pro man on the ground, Derek Reeves, won't be contending with a language barrier.

For producers looking to tap into this burgeoning resource, Chia says there are a few ways to go about it. One is to contact the MDA via the Singapore Media Fusion website ([www.smf.sg](http://www.smf.sg)) and outline the types of companies/projects you're pursuing. The other is to approach the SMF pavilion at MIPCOM or MIPTV, or take a jaunt to Singapore in June for Broadcast Asia or in December for the Asia Media Festival. At last year's Media Financing Forum, which is part of the latter festival, Chia says

roughly US\$250 million in funding was on the table, up almost US\$50 million from the previous year.

In addition to the ST/Nelvana deal, the MDA has helped finance the Singaporean portion of a number of co-pros whose concepts originated outside of the region, including CGI series *Master Raindrop* (Big Communications/Flying Bark in Australia/New Zealand's Flux Animation), *Zigby* (featured on page 16) and *Nanoboy* (Scrwal Studios in Singapore/Hong Kong's Agogo).

If the MDA has its way, it won't be long until international producers start turning to Singapore for ideas as well as technical expertise. "We do have a strong interest in seeing IP developed in the region," says Dyer. "Our hope is that with our co-pro partners, we can find IP in Singapore that we can develop and bring back into North America. That, to me, is the big home run." **NS**



Nelvana's rich pool of quality preschool shows, including *Rolie Polie Olie*, covers off one of KidsCo's two target demos

# KIDSCO CATERS TO INDIES TO BUILD ITS LAUNCH SKED

by jocelyn christie

**KidsCo draws in  
prodcos with free  
dubs, flexible deals  
and an open-door  
policy to library  
programming**

Entertainment, Nelvana Enterprises and Sparrowhawk Media (which bought Hallmark's international broadcast and distribution outfit in April 2005, and is headed up by ex-Disney International president David Hulbert as CEO), KidsCo is essentially a 24/7 multi-platform channel for preschoolers and kids ages six to 10 that aims to stand apart from pan-regional veterans Cartoon Network, Nick and Disney/Jetix in several key ways.

**I**F it were anyone else talking up plans to launch a pan-regional kids channel by September, they'd probably be laughed out of the room. But the combined experience and assets possessed by the triumvirate behind KidsCo—not to mention their very indie-friendly model for accessing content—has been stirring up a considerable amount of curiosity in kids production circles lately.

A joint-venture between DIC

First, it's European in sensibility, rather than North American. Second, while established channels work slowly towards breaking their dependence on ad revenue, KidsCo is starting off in line with the anti-commercial zeitgeist of the day. And third, the net is open to library programming that may have trouble finding a broadcast home now that its newness has faded.

This last element no doubt held particular appeal for shareholding content partners DIC and Nelvana, both with deep libraries of programming, much of which is well past its premiere phase. KidsCo MD Paul Robinson says vertical integration is at the root of this particular distribution challenge. "It's getting harder because acquisition budgets at the Hollywood channels are going down, and they're putting more and more US content on air instead. Producers like DIC and Nelvana see KidsCo as an opportunity to get their product out to market fast in a way that's neater and cleaner, and that delivers lots of eyeballs, which are critical because they lead to ancillary revenue and brand-building."

To this end, KidsCo's three-year rollout plan is quite aggressive, with Central and Eastern Europe pinpointed as the launch targets. Sparrowhawk's team is currently in negotiations to lock



down carriage deals in four countries to start with, drawing from a nearly-there shortlist comprised of Poland, Hungary, Romania, the Middle East, Turkey and Russia. Once the September launch is accomplished, the company plans to add territories including the Ukraine, the Baltics, Latvia, Estonia and Bulgaria in short order. Asia-Pacific is up next, with a rollout shaping up around Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines fluidly scheduled for sometime in November. Next year will be devoted to bringing the rest of Western Europe (including the crowded UK market) and Latin America online, and the JV also has ambitions to tackle the much more complicated Japanese, Chinese and Indian markets down the road. All tolled, the long-term goal is to be operating channels in 40-plus territories by the end of 2009.

The MO for establishing this ambitious footprint is to leverage the channel-launching expertise and on-the-ground relationships tied up in the Hallmark infrastructure, which operates broadcast outlets in 165 countries from a state-of-the-art facility in Denver, Colorado. Not having to set up from scratch brings KidsCo's launch costs down monumentally and allows for a speedy market entry. The JV also plans to shoulder the cost of dubbing the programming it airs in all necessary local languages, and this may open up additional sales opportunities for the content owners it does business with.

But as far as tangible payment goes, KidsCo has pledged to set aside 40% of its total revenues—whether they be from subscriptions, limited sponsorship or interactive media—for IP owners who sign over their libraries on a non-exclusive basis. These earnings will be allocated depending on how many shows producers provide to the channel, with a premium given for tentpole shows. "So we're essentially rewarding the content owners for giving us the good stuff, and not just the library fare they can't sell," says Robinson. "And the non-exclusive nature of our deal model means producers can still sell to other broadcasters, so their distribution revenues aren't cannibalized."

In some cases, shows in libraries KidsCo has access to may be tied up in exclusive sales to free- or pay-TV channels, but

Robinson estimates that no more than 25% of the shows in the DIC and Nelvana catalogues are in this predicament. And this is just a temporary situation, he emphasizes. "At the moment, we're working around our partners' deals because they're pre-existing, but going forward, these companies will be factoring KidsCo into their distribution strategies."

Although they opted not to own shares in the venture, both Entertainment Rights and TV-Loonland have agreed to provide KidsCo with content, and EM.Entertainment's recent move to merge its distribution business with Sparrowhawk's could see the



Animation, including DIC's *Madeline*, will comprise about 75% of the net's schedule

Junior catalogue play into the channel's programming lineup in the future. KidsCo is currently negotiating with several additional prodcos, and new deals are expected to be nailed down over the next two months. In the meantime, Robinson (who spent eight years growing the Mouse's broadcast presence in the UK as SVP and MD of Walt Disney Television International/ABC Cable Networks Group) expects the following high-volume shows to figure into the launch schedule: *Sabrina*, *Inspector Gadget*, *Dennis the Menace*, *Madeline* and *Strawberry Shortcake* from DIC; *Babar*, *George Shrinks*, *Brace Face* and *Rolie Polie Olie* from Nelvana; ER's *Postman*

"KidsCo" continued on page 17

# UP NEXT

## What's developing in kids production

by jocelyn christie

### Zigby co-pro trots towards production

On the heels of bringing top creative talent Avrill Stark's studio under its umbrella as A Stark Entertainment, Aussie outfit Flying Bark Productions is focusing on making over a much-loved literary zebra for the small screen. Zigby is the lead character in a series of preschool books penned by Brian Paterson and published by HarperCollins worldwide. Outside its native territory down under, the nine-title franchise is on shelves in the UK, France, Holland, Italy, Spain, Scandinavia, Japan, Korea and the US, and has sold more than 750,000 copies to date.

The property has piqued a lot of TV interest over the past four years, but never seemed able to get off the ground. With co-pro partners Thunderbird Films (Vancouver, Canada) and BIG Communications (Singapore) on board, and presales to ABC Australia and Canada's Treehouse TV locked in, Flying Bark subsidiary Greenpatch Production is now well into pre-production on the 52 x 10-minute CGI series. The goal is to deliver it by fall 2008 for US\$5 million.

Series director Mark Barnard and his team have spent a year developing the characters and backgrounds, and they've got 15 scripts in various stages of completion. Episodes center around Zigby and his best friends McMeer the Meerkat and Bertie the Guinea Fowl, who are supported by a big cast of other eight-year-old animals. The pals live on a jungle island without adult supervision, and navigate their way around problems that crop up by banding together.

For example, when Celine the Hippo goes on holidays, Zigby offers to take care of her prize-winning garden, the jewel of which is a rare purple jungle vine. Eager to please, Zigby, McMeer and Bertie

give the garden a good sprucing up, which includes sending a grub they find munching on a leaf back to the jungle. Zigby gets so absorbed in the clean-up that he accidentally overfeeds, overwaters and overexposes the purple vine, which grows out of control. He tries trimming the plant with shears, but that just makes it grow faster, and before long McMeer and Bertie find themselves tangled up in its snaky appendages. Finally, Zigby remembers the little grub, and brings him back to the garden, where the bug whistles for 100 of his friends to come and help munch the vine back down to size.

### Cookie Jar visits Busytown for new tot toon

Cookie Jar Group is going back to the character-rich well of Richard Scarry's *Busytown* to cast its latest series *Hurray for Huckle*. Targeting inquisitive preschoolers, the 2-D animated series revolves around five kid critters who solve the puzzles of life that pop up in their cul-de-sac environs.

In one ep, for example, a light bulb happens to go off when Hilda Hippo sneezes on it, and that sends her curiosity into overdrive—Why do light bulbs shine? Why do they go out? Why do they get hot? In search of answers, the wee sleuths inspect the sun through a pinhole projector, disassemble a lamp at the Fix-It Shop and check out the inner workings of a huge sky-sweeping spotlight at the local movie theater.

Flying Bark has aged up the critters in *Zigby* to make them more aspirational for preschoolers

*Hurray for Huckle*'s publishing foundation is rock-solid, with more than 150 million copies

of Richard Scarry's books sold worldwide, in more than 30 different languages. That pedigree should go a long way towards attracting international presale interest. Budgeted at US\$6 million, the 52 x 11-minute series (designed to air as 26 x half hours) is currently in production and scheduled to air on both Canadian pubcaster the CBC and Qubo (a 24/7 diginet and a three-hour block on NBC, i-network and Telemundo) in the US this fall. **N**



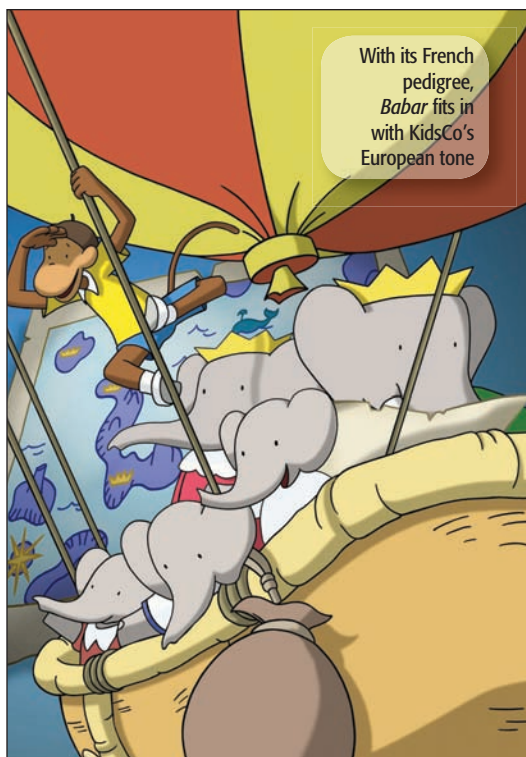


*"KidsCo" continued from page 15*

*Pat and Basil Brush, and My Little Pony and Clifford from TV-L.*

Robinson has already defined his blocking strategy for the channel. On weekdays, the broadcast day will start off targeting kids six to 10 during breakfast time from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m., before switching to preschool until 3 p.m. Then kids will take center stage again until the 6 p.m. family movie slot, after which live-action fare rounds out the schedule until midnight, when repeats will fill the gap until the next morning. On weekends, preschool shows lead off from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m., and then programming for core kids kicks in and runs until the family movie's 6 p.m. start time.

With more than 6,000 half hours from DIC and Nelvana in his arsenal, Robinson plans to refresh the lineup fairly regularly with library fare in the beginning. But he still needs family-friendly movies to feed into the nightly block,

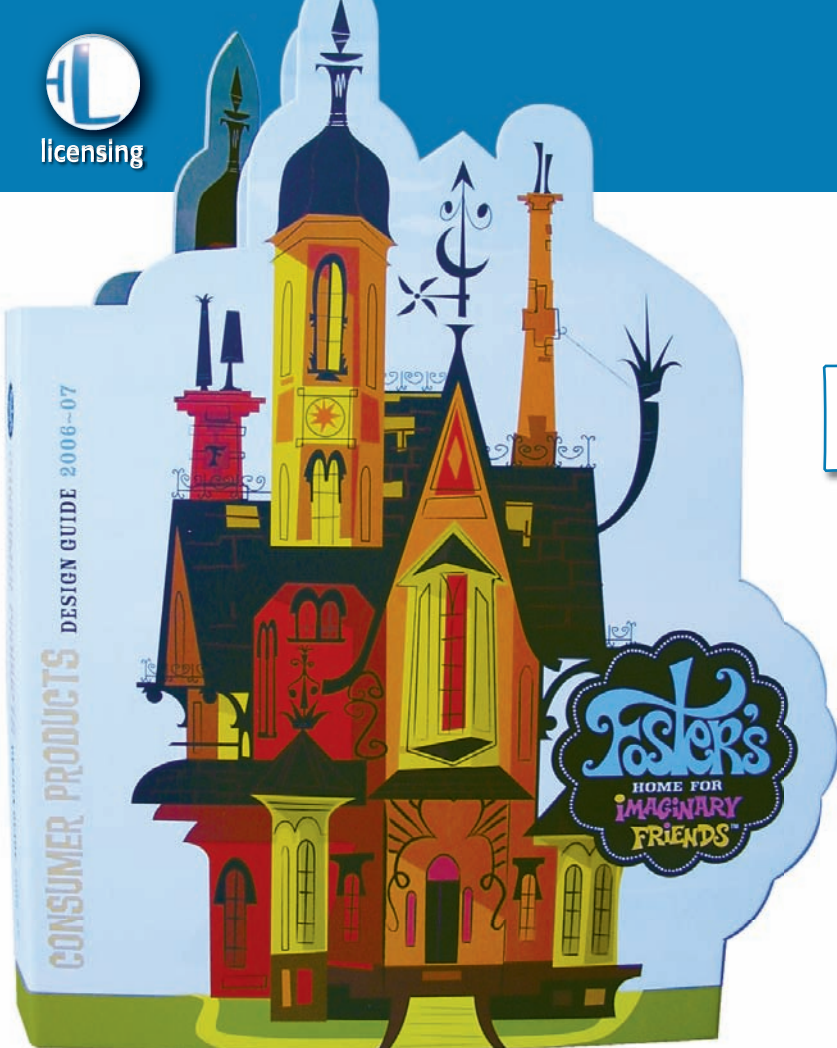


and is in talks with companies such as PorchLight Entertainment and Fireworks Entertainment to fill the gap. He's looking for pics that are 60 to 90 minutes long, and is open to both animated and live-action pitches; the channel overall will feature a 75/25 genre split. Robinson also expects to get into original production at some point, although it's not a priority for the near future.

Surveying the competition currently operating in Central and Eastern Europe, Robinson says KidsCo offers an alternative to well-entrenched nets Cartoon and Jetix because it doesn't intend to carry any boys action shows, and Nick isn't a direct rival because it targets older kids. Disney, meanwhile, is just getting into the region, which is home to a very strong local channel called Minimini. **S**

## Sales Roundup

Program	Broadcaster	Style/Format	Demo	Producer/Distributor
Alien Clones From Outer Space	ABC (Australia)	2-D/52 x 11 minutes	six to 10	SupperTime Entertainment, Telescreen/SupperTime
Bigfoot Presents: Meteor and the Mighty Monster Trucks	NRK (Norway)	CGI/ 52 x 11 minutes	preschool	Brandissimo/CCI Entertainment
Erky Perky		CGI/52 x 11 minutes	eight to 12	CCI Entertainment, Ambience Entertainment/CCI
Ghost Trackers		LA/40 x 30 minutes	tweens	CCI Entertainment
Harry and His Bucket Full of Dinosaurs		2-D/104 x 11 minutes	preschool	CCI Entertainment
Bruno and the Banana Bunch	Discovery Kids Latin America	Flash/26 x 11 minutes	preschool	Cuppa Coffee Studios/AWOL Animation
Grossology	Jetix UK	2-D/26 x half hours	six to 11	Nelvana Enterprises
Life With Derek (season 3)	Disney Channel (US, Italy, Germany, Latin America, Spain) Toonami (UK) Daro (Central and Eastern Europe) Noga (Israel) Cuatro (Spain) France 2	LA/26 x half hours	family	Shaftesbury Films
Lunar Jim	Nick (Belgium and the Netherlands) RTE (Ireland) Hungama TV (India) TV2 (Denmark) V-me (US)	stop-motion/52 x 11 minutes	preschool	Alliance Atlantis, Halifax Film/Alliance Atlantis International Content Distribution
Prank Patrol (season 3)	YTV	LA/26 x half hours	eight to 14	Apartment 11 Productions/MarVista Entertainment
Sea Princesses	ARD/Ki.Ka (Germany)	2-D/52 x 12 minutes	girls four to seven	Southern Star Entertainment, Neptuno Films, Flamma Films/Southern Star International
The Zula Patrol	National Geographic Latin America	CGI/26 x half hours	three to eight	MarVista Entertainment



# ELEMENTS OF STYLE MAKING YOUR GUIDE LOOK GOOD AND WORK HARDER

by emily claire afan and jocelyn christie

**This style guide  
how-to covers  
the essentials, the  
theories, the issues  
and then some**

getting the style guide right is crucial to scoring a merch hit.

To get the ball rolling, you've first got to decide whether to handle the project in-house using your own creative resources, or to work closely with a contracted design firm. Most newcomers to the merch business choose the latter approach, and a licensing agent can help connect you with these companies. Prices can vary widely for style guide design; in fact, one indie producer who recently put out a call for quotes to a handful of design firms received estimates that ranged from US\$40,000 to US\$200,000.

Regardless of who's handling your guide, the creative process that's involved is much the same, and it all hinges around research and brand immersion. It typically starts with watching the series

**G**rabbing and hanging onto the attention of licensees and retailers is a monumental challenge these days, given the number of kids entertainment properties they have to choose from. But you can give your pitch an edge with a killer style guide. This hard-working tool is at the heart of every CP program, doing overtime as a calling card, a presentation piece, a licensee manual and a brand roadmap all at once. So

or movie repeatedly to become familiar with the property's sensibility, characters and storylines, and then brainstorming with the creator(s). On the research side, many style guide designers working at studios or larger production companies have subscriptions to trend research services that keep them on top of general shifts in kid culture. And if the company has an established consumer products business, it's always helpful to talk to existing licensees about category-specific trends that might come into play.

And then there's everything else. When creative executive director Robin Beuthin and the rest of the Sony Pictures Consumer Products team was gearing up to start working on its guide for *Surfs Up*, which is due out in theaters next month, they tapped into the surfing culture for inspiration, poring through surf mags, visiting surf shops, and meeting with champion surfers to ID what's cool and aspirational about their world. The resulting graphic scheme is raw and organic (as opposed to the slick, computer-generated images that came into play for *Spider-Man 3*, for example), with lots of layering because that's what characterizes the posters and mags that surfers grok to.

One tool that style guide designers constantly use to keep track of all the research and artwork that ends up feeding into the final product is a mood board. It's essentially a big display panel that houses color studies, developing character art, sample materials, patterns, borders, trends, etc. "They're meant to inspire us, and they help us visually communicate to our brand, licensing and marketing



teams where we are going with our guides," says Jorge Ferreira, SVP of creative resources at HIT Entertainment.

On average, style guides take between six and eight months to complete, so mood boards are particularly important when a property gameplan involves categories that work with longer lead times, such as toys and promotional premiums. "They have to work so far in advance for sculpting, in particular, that it's imperative for them to have as much information as possible early on to get the flavor of the property," says Sony's Beuthin. Elements from the boards—including a character size chart, color palette and fonts—serve as the foundation of the pre-pack, which is like a sneak-peek of the finished guide.

Most guides start off with a general description of the film or TV show and then get into the nitty-gritty graphic components, including icons, logos, color guides (breaking out main, secondary and accent palettes), character and background art, prints, borders, patterns, phrases and text that can be used, fonts and sample product applications. Accompanying the physical book is a disk with digital files of all the graphic elements that manufacturers have at their disposal to use on the licensed products.

Kyra Crilly, art director for Spin Master's Marshmallow furniture line, says it's really important to create layered files so that elements can be easily dropped in and out during product design, and providing both Illustrator art and flat vector images is just as key. She also likes to have a lot of background art so that she can build scenes onto her products, and says Sesame Workshop does an especially good job at providing its licensees with really complete and intuitive guides to work with.

The other component that most guides devote a fair bit of space to is outlining the parameters of how the art and graphics can be used, and there are two divergent schools of thought governing this terrain. On one hand, IP owners often need to make sure their licensed lines are aesthetically unified to make an impact at retail, and strict usage guidelines can prevent manufacturers from creating product that doesn't fit into that brand vision. But on the other hand, hampering your licensees with too many rules can prevent product innovation.

With 1,000 licensees working across 45 product categories on Barbie, one might expect Mattel's guides for the property to be really restrictive. But Tim Parsey, VP of lifestyle design for Mattel Brands, says he prefers to work closely with licensees and monitor the direction of the design process all along, rather than steering it from the outset with a narrow creative tunnel. "But you do need a few rules, because that's how a brand becomes clear and cohesive," he adds. Some common elements that licensors outline parameters for include character poses, logo treatments and packaging elements.

Another challenge for IP owners lies in determining how often to update their style guides. Fashion-driven soft line categories such

as apparel and accessories need to keep up with seasonal trends, which change every few months, while less fickle categories like consumer electronics can support the same product range for a much longer period of time.

Licensors with broad CP programs for evergreen brands often create a master style guide that gets updated every couple of years, and then supplement it with category-specific or seasonally themed (Halloween, Valentine's Day, etc.) mini-guides that give licensees in fast-moving product sectors an opportunity to generate excitement at retail with new product. But Axiom Design Collaborative founder and creative director Brent Watts, whose company has done work for Universal, Warner Bros. and MGM, cautions that too-frequent refreshes can lead to over-exposure. "We've seen companies run their properties into the ground by not letting them rest—people get tired of them," he says.



Overly rigid product application parameters can hamper the kind of licensee innovation that led to the Web Blaster hit toy

Format is also debatable these days as the need for cost-efficiencies, speedier access and greener business practices move more style guides into the digital realm. Instead of printing physical guides, with a typical first run of up to 1,000 copies, many companies are opting to post password-accessible PDF versions online. Hyperdesign president and creative director Chris Metzger, who has done work for Pokémon and Marvel, says only 60% of the guides his company

*"Style guides" continued on page 21*

# Pets' teamwork central to L&M plan

**IT**'s been a little over a year since top-ranking preschool series *The Wonder Pets!* debuted on Nick Jr. And with a CD and DVD just out, Nickelodeon and Viacom Consumer Products is in the midst of putting together a full mass-market merchandise program for the TV property.

Division president Leigh Anne Brodsky and her team are taking the classic Nick approach to licensing a new IP. While the show is building an audience and ratings on air, product rollout will be supported by TV exposure and follow at a more measured pace in order to build demand. For example, the DVD and CD launch coincided with the broadcast of a special half-hour episode called "Save The Wonder Pets!"

The full product launch isn't slated to take place until 2008, and Brodsky isn't ready

just yet to divulge the name of the property's master toy partner. But she'll be looking to augment the product offering with additional tentpeg category partners in the coming months, so you can expect the show's stars, Linny, Tuck and Ming-Ming, to have a major presence on the Nick stand at Licensing Show next month.

Brodsky envisions the range of preschool product, aimed at boys and girls, focusing on the ensemble concept. "The things we'll obviously want to capitalize on are teamwork, superheroes and saving the animals—three things our research shows us are really resonating with kids and their moms."

The show, which also airs on Noggin, was created by Little Airplane Productions' president Josh Selig and is currently in its second season. In terms of performance, *The Wonder Pets!* consistently ranks amongst the top three preschool shows on US commercial TV. **ECA**



Nick's style guide for *The Wonder Pets!* touts the ensemble cast

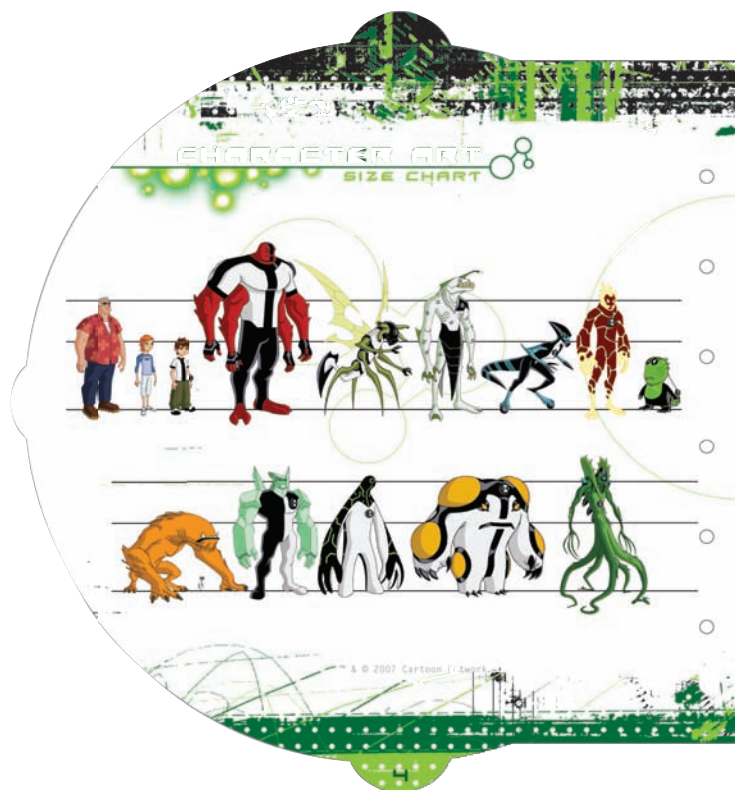


## PROPERTY LISTING

### Licenses recently granted

Property	Granted by	Granted to	Product category	Demo	Release date
Animal Crossing: Wild World	Nintendo	Tommy	master toy	kids	July 2007
Brainy Baby	Mary Meyer	Brainy Baby	developmental toys, plush	infants/toddlers	holiday 2008
Cars Mater-National	Disney Consumer Products	THQ	video game	kids	fall 2007
Domo	Big Tent Entertainment	Play Along	master toy	kids	fall 2007
It's Happy Bunny	CopCorp	American Greetings	stickers, magnets, notepads, back-to-school stationery	tweens/teens	winter 2007
Little Princess	TV-Loonland	Martin Yaffe International	figures, plush, inflatables, wheeled/educational activity toys	kids two to six	February 2008
Lizzie McGuire	Telescreen	Jollibee Foods (The Philippines) Prestige Clothing/Little Number (South Africa)	toys/gadgets outerwear, sleepwear, socks and hooded towels	girls eight to 14	fall 2007 July 2007
Wow! Wow! Wubbzy!	Bolder Media	Starz Home Entertainment Fisher-Price Hasbro Scholastic Simon & Shuster Meredith Children's Apparel Network SG Footwear Dream Apparel Berkshire Unique Bakery Crafts A.E. Nathan CTI Industries	DVD/video master toy license games and puzzles publishing (school and retail) coloring/activity books sound storybooks apparel footwear sleepwear headwear/accessories party goods wholesale cake decorations over-the-counter fabric Mylar balloons	kids	spring/summer 2008  fall 2007 spring/summer 2008





*"Style guides" continued from page 19*

designs are printed now. But what you save on budget, you may lose in effectiveness. Hard-copy guides can benefit from unique production techniques like foil printing, specialized inks and textured paper that may inspire more creative product design, says Metzger. "With a printed guide, you have a tactile experience. It helps to hold it in your hands and peruse it at your leisure to get a brand overview."

If you do decide to go the printed route and if you have some room in your budget, it doesn't hurt to add bells and whistles. For Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends, Cartoon Network Enterprises created a die-cut style guide in the shape of the house where the characters live. And inside the book, each product category was contained in a different and appropriate room. So applications for party goods,

for example, were housed in the Party Room. The guide's innovative approach earned CNE style guide awards from both *HOW* and *Communication Arts* magazines last year.

But Hyperdesign's Metzger points out that all the fancy printing apps in the world mean zilch if a guide loses sight of its core purpose, which is to provide licensees with the info and assets they need to produce high-quality product that upholds the integrity of the brand it stems from. **N**

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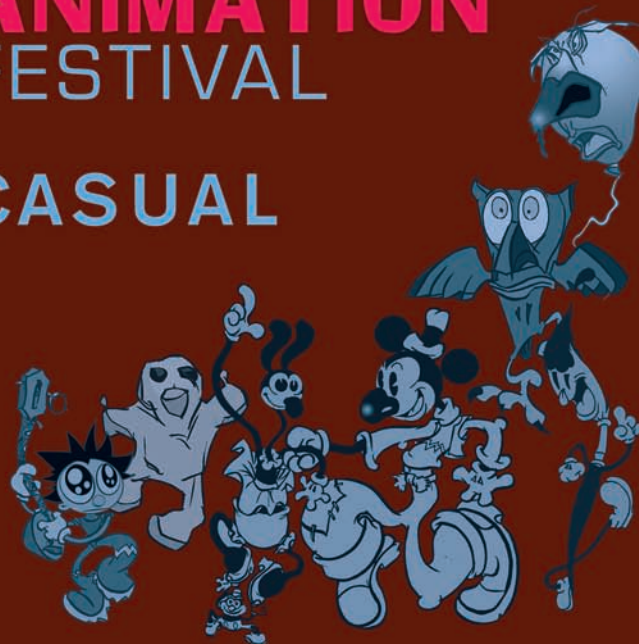
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## CASUAL



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# HOT TOPIC CRANKS ITS MUSIC BIZ

by kate calder

**Teen retailer tries indie band podcasts and recruits music industry vet to amp up its street cred**

Claiming to be “everything about the music,” teen retailer Hot Topic was naturally quick to jump on the potential of podcasting last fall, when it buddied up with Redmond, Washington-based music services provider PlayNetwork to launch a 20-minute Hot Topic tune podcast on iTunes. The venture has since led to three more DJ-led broadcasts featuring up-and-coming indie punk bands, and Hot Topic SVP Chris Kearns says the number of listeners has grown significantly with each release.

Indie artists tend to embrace the digital arena as a launchpad more heartily than label-signed mainstream groups, and with CD sales in a downward spiral, Hot Topic was looking for a way to position itself as a leading source for new music. “We’re focusing on baby bands and trying to entertain and educate our customers by introducing them to music they might not have heard,” says Kearns.

To manage this business and expand the reach of HT’s branded music concept into new areas, the retailer has created a new chief music officer position and recruited John Kirkpatrick to fill it. Kirkpatrick comes with 17 years of experience in the music industry, starting off his career in the A&R divisions of Capitol Records and Elektra Entertainment and most recently serving as SVP of music and creative affairs at Paramount Pictures, where he was responsible for all musical aspects of the studio’s films. Kearns says

hiring Kirkpatrick was a strategic move that signals the chain’s intention to expand its reach digitally, especially in relation to its dealings with music labels.

Priding itself as a resource for music and merch serving the 12- to 22-year-old punk rock set, Hot Topic has more than 690 mall-based locations in the US and an online store that sells fashion, décor and accessories reflecting teen music culture. Its foray into providing HT music compilations directly to its customer base began a little more than a year ago, when the company contracted PlayNetwork to run a closed-circuit music broadcast that entertains shoppers in-store with a specialized mix of mainstream and indie rock. The HT Radio feed also plays on [www.hottopic.com](http://www.hottopic.com), where Kearns says listeners often leave the stream playing for half an hour at a time while they surf or IM.

PlayNetwork’s SVP of promotional services, David Brewster, says that in addition to delivering the podcasts to HT’s web server and iTunes, the company also chases licenses for individual songs and advises the retailer on episode themes. But it’s Hot Topic’s savvy music team that chooses the song lineup, records the DJ bits and sequences them into the show.

Although the primary goals are to extend the Hot Topic experience into other forms of entertainment and offer customers a new way to interact with the brand, the podcasts also serve a marketing function as they feature some information about special sales and merchandise available at the chain.

For its part, PlayNetwork, which already has national brands like Starbucks, Abercrombie & Fitch and TGI Fridays in its roster of clients, has been entertaining a lot of interest based on its podcast work for Hot Topic, some of which has been from other companies operating in the tween/teen space. **NS**



# KB Toys buys into retail intel program

**I**n a cut-throat toy market, retailers need to do everything they can to wring out every inefficiency from their operations and plan promos and stunts that are all but guaranteed to increase sales. And one company that's stepping up to help them do this is retail intelligence service QuantiSense. The Washington, DC-based outfit specializes in helping clients including FAO Schwarz and KB Toys devise merchandising plans based on seasonal trends, events and regional customer demand.

A relatively new QuantiSense customer, KB Toys is just embarking on a process that will phase in the entire service over the next year. Starting this month, the first 100-day stage of implementation involves installing the software and getting the system up and running across all of KB's departments.

"Our software pulls the data from their different operational systems, transforms it, and puts it into a centralized database that we've licensed to them," says Jeff Giberstein, QuantiSense's VP of marketing. The software is able to churn out a wide variety of data summaries tailored to suit the info needs of many levels of staff, from chief executive down to store manager. It's built to highlight things like overstocks, stockouts and product upswings and downswings, and can inform decisions concerning product allocation, assortment planning, pricing and supply chain management.

Subsequent phases will enable the company to analyze sales patterns and rate the effectiveness and profitability of running various kinds of promotions at different times. Tim Armstrong, KB's director of analytical business solutions, says that once the system is fully implemented, the chain will be able to determine things like whether a 20% off sale over the weekend drove sales, influenced customer behavior and moved the desired amount of inventory.

Giberstein says a low-end installation runs at just under US\$500,000. That initial cost includes the QuantiSense software, as well as some third-party software and hardware needed to support the system. A 20% annual fee then goes towards system maintenance and updates. **KC**



KB Toys' new data management system aims to inform its merch strategy

## K'Nex moves edu-line out of schools to connect with parents

**H**oping to take advantage of the growing number of edu-conscious parents looking to give their kids an early jump on curriculum-based learning, K'Nex Education is bringing some of the construction toy sets it previously distributed exclusively through educators-only catalogues to bricks-and-mortar retail. The 12-year-old product line is specifically designed to tie into school curriculae by demonstrating concepts in math, science and technology for kids in kindergarten up to grade 12. The sets can now be purchased at specialty parent/teacher stores such as Becker Brothers in the US and Scholar's Choice in Canada, as well as various independent shops and online stores.

In addition to connecting with keen and home-schooling parents, taking the line into retail should also help the company reach teachers who routinely spend their own money on extra classroom materials, says K'Nex Education sales and marketing coordinator Maureen Kratz, who adds that mass-market channels aren't in the cards. "We are going to be very selective with the distribution of this line," she says, and the company is only interested in exploring channels where parents and teachers shop for educational toys.

K'Nex will use teacher conferences, professional development workshops, email blasts and print ads to communicate the line's retail availability. The company's marketing gameplan also calls for playing the message up in its ongoing classroom challenge initiative and K'Nex: Building Thrill Rides, its traveling museum program that brings nine large-scale rides—including a 10-foot roller coaster and six-foot ferris wheel—to museums so kids can learn about the physics behind them. **KC**

## Joolz brings magic into the jewelry-making aisle

Ohio Art is adding a bit of magic to a new DIY jewelry-making playset that will roll out in September. The Bryan, Ohio-based toyco has teamed up with Vivid Imaginations in the UK to bring Joolz Magic Gems across the pond. The SKUs contain basic jewelry-making hardware for crafting necklaces, bracelets, earrings, hair slides and rings. But they also come with what looks like a bunch of...well, rocks. Girls must shake the seemingly valueless pebbles up in a device containing a special tonic that will "magically" transform them into gems. What really happens is the jewels are coated with a chalky, dirt-like substance that dissolves in warm tap water (the magic potion).

Ohio Art's director of marketing, Martin Killgallon, says sales in jewelry sections of toy stores have traditionally been driven by piece count. "What we like about this product is it has a magical component and some additional activity other than just jewelry-making," says Killgallon. The magic gem sets are available in different sizes, including a 35-rock SKU for US\$14.99 and a 15-rock version for US\$9.99. The company plans to run a TV ad from August to December to support the launch. **KC**





# THE FUTURE IS WILD

## NICK AND CN MONKEY WITH ZOO BRANDING

by kate calder

**Cartoon partners help zoos connect with kids and instill in them an empathy for wild animals**

**J**ust down the path from Zoo Atlanta's world-renowned Panda exhibit is an attraction that houses a different breed of wildlife entirely. In a paddock lined with TV monitors rather than bamboo shoots, packs of uninhibited kids roar like lions and laugh like hyenas alongside classic cartoon icons including Yogi Bear and Magilla Gorilla.

The "Wild Like Me" exhibit launched last spring with the aid of sponsoring partner Turner Broadcasting System, and the zoo is anticipating that it will see a 30% hike in traffic this year, due in part to the birth of a baby panda.

"Parents love it because their kids can blow off some steam and learn at the same time," says Dennis Adamovich, SVP of marketing at Cartoon Network, which supported its hometown zoo philanthropically for years. The goal for the zoo was to instill empathy for animals in future generations, so visitors are encouraged to do things like build an animal habitat, measure their height and strength to see how they'd stack up in the animal kingdom, and act out the part of animals in a nature mockumentary starring Yogi and other Boomerang characters.

Cartoon isn't the only broadcaster to have embraced the zoo experience as a brand-building opportunity. Nickelodeon is embarking on a major campaign based around its nature-themed *Go, Diego, Go!* series at the Miami Metrozoo this summer as part

of a five-year partnership. The centerpiece of the undertaking is an Amazon & Beyond exhibit that's in the works for 2008. When it's finished, this 27-acre rainforest will support 1,000 species such as harpy eagles, giant river otters and anacondas, and Diego elements will include a stage show, stamping stations, field journals and educational materials for schools.

The stage show will run this year to tease the exhibit's launch, along with Diego costumed character appearances on-site and at various marketing events throughout the state. "He's basically going to help us build awareness for the Amazon & Beyond opening," says the zoo's marketing director, Paul Vrooman, adding that he's expecting record-setting attendance this summer.

Miami Metrozoo was actually on board to play a role in Diego's launch in 2005, through a partnership Nick had set up with the American Zoo Association. The plan was for zoos across the country to run poster giveaways that would be promoted by radio spots in each local market. But Metrozoo had to pull out of the stunt because it was scheduled to run just as zoo staff were boarding up the park to withstand Hurricane Katrina.

Diego's trip to the zoo dovetails nicely with the start of *Go, Diego, Go Live: The Great Jaguar Rescue*, a cross-country touring show that will travel to 50 markets this year, landing in Florida in June and July. Though the tour and the zoo exhibit aren't specifically linked, Pam Kaufman, Nick's EVP of marketing and worldwide partnerships, says the two initiatives are part of a larger effort to push the theme of Diego's connection to animals. "It adds up to more noise around Diego than a one-off promotion can create," she says. ■



# Facebook for kids?

## JAM ages down social networking with MyPicme

by emily claire afan

JAM Media's preschool show *Picme* is migrating from the small screen to the online realm this month with the launch of a new interactive web hub. The Irish prodco plans to roll out its own dedicated MyPicme domain by year's end, but first it will debut as a page on [www.nickjr.co.uk](http://www.nickjr.co.uk), and the goal is to convince the show's other international

more appeal for parents. He adds that his team was very careful to create a safe and secure place where kids can share news and digital stuff with friends without the threat of web predators.

The site will also incorporate personalized wallpapers and screen savers, plus about a dozen games in which kids can play as their Picme avatar with the show's five main animal characters. These include a dress-up game, a version of card-matching staple Memory, virtual jigsaw puzzles and a mix-and-match game that charges kids with putting together body parts to make an original animal.

But JAM isn't stopping there. Rice and his team have plans to roll out a second, more global community interface by the end of the year that will let kids in different countries network and play real-time games with each other.

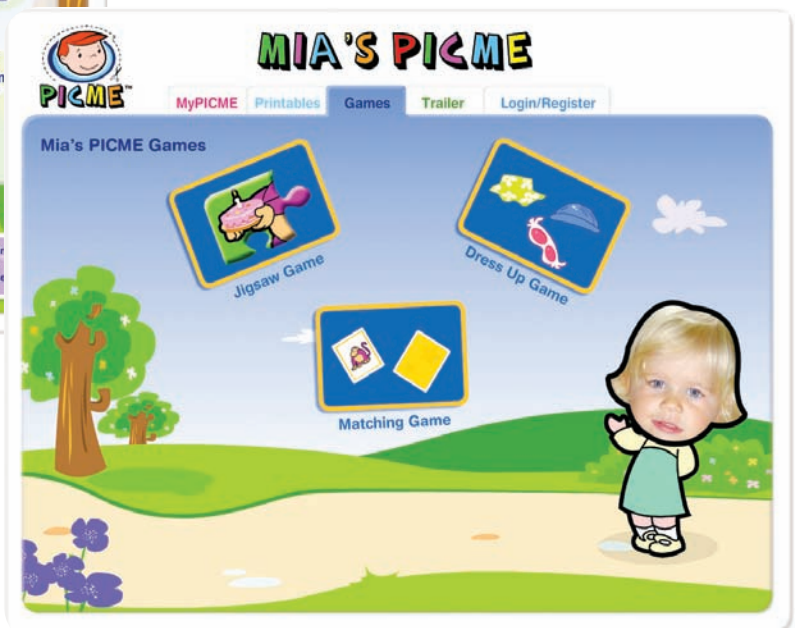



Hinging on personalized avatars that borrow a page from the TV series it's based on, MyPicme also takes a page from Facebook and MySpace with social networking apps like profiles and multiplayer games

broadcasters (including S4C in Wales, US HD channel Animania and France's TPS Jeunesse) to do the same.

The MyPicme site borrows some of the same social networking elements that make MySpace and Facebook so popular. Parents can use these tools to help their kids create profile pages by listing personal details like their friends, fave TV shows and desserts, as well as compositing mash-up pictures that put the wee ones' photo-real heads on animated bodies. This feature employs JAM's proprietary Headhunter software, the same engine that makes the photo/cartoon hybrid characters in the TV show.

CEO John Rice expects the photo studio to be the biggest draw for kids, who get a huge kick out of seeing themselves in the media they spend time in, while the networking features should hold



And to encourage more interactivity between parents and kids, MyPicme will eventually feature an area where parents can make their own personalized avatars and play games alongside their children. The site will also house a screening room and editing suite to let parents create mini-clips starring their whole family's hybrid characters, which can then be downloaded to mobile phones and portable devices. 



# \$ELLING SCREEN TO SCREEN

by kate calder

**W**ith the dog-and-pony-show portion of the annual US kids advertising upfront out of the way, network sales execs are getting down to business as they fight for their share of the some US\$800 million spent by advertisers on three key periods: Easter, back-to-school and Christmas. On the programming side, kidnets are continuing to push content into the digital realm, while their sales counterparts are taking this tack

**Kidnets  
integrate  
online  
content to  
bridge the  
digital gap**

to reach untapped streams of ad revenue. And this year, a few new challenges are threatening to shake up the traditional advertiser/broadcaster relationship. To begin with, an industry-wide shift to embrace a new ratings currency is in the works.

Nielsen's pending release of commercial-ratings data at the end of May and its perceived effect on sales dynamics is currently the talk of the town. "Commercial ratings are going to get done in some way, shape or form," says Jason Maltby, president and co-executive director of national broadcast at New York-based media agency Mindshare. However, he notes, the impact on kidnet sales should be fairly minimal.

While adult programmers scramble to find new ways to increase viewer engagement during commercial breaks, the scene is more

encouraging for players in the kid space. "Kids don't see commercials as interrupting their programming," says Maltby. Rather, he says, they happily view the 30-second spots as a source of information about new toys and products.

Also keeping ad sales execs on their toes this past year was the eBay Media Marketplace, a proposed online ad-auction space that has been effectively thwarted for now. Key trade org the Cable-television Advertising Bureau scrapped the system after members tested the process and found it wanting. Several cablers reported that it lacked the human element necessary to negotiate integrated and interactive buys.

In Maltby's opinion, cheap deals aren't a valid reason to cause an industry-wide shift to online ad sales. "If they develop a truly soup-to-nuts model that makes it transparent and improves the process, then we'll have something applicable," he says. In the meantime, he believes commoditizing media will only work for classic bottom-feeders with short-term goals who can risk losing bids for air time, as opposed to players with complex, long-term brand launches in mind that don't hinge on securing the cheapest spot possible.

On the spending front, Maltby predicts sales to key kids advertisers in toys and packaged foods will remain flat. The fact that most networks are more eager to talk about non-endemic ad sales and are actively courting new advertisers in electronics and digital bears this forecast out somewhat.

And food advertisers, in particular, continue to tread lightly in the kids space amidst an unprecedented level of public scrutiny. Maltby says he doesn't see packaged goods firms ramping up spending this year. And even though there are healthier products on the market, there's still too much controversy swirling around the category to make these manufacturers want to push the ad envelope.



Jim Perry, EVP of 360 Degree Brand Sales for the kids and family group at Nickelodeon, however, believes the worst is behind the cablenet when it comes to food advertising. "Companies like Kraft that pulled out two years ago have taken some time to reformulate products that were deemed unhealthy, and are now back to marketing them," he says.

As for toys, despite 2006 figures from Nielsen's Monitor Plus showing that toy and game ad spend across all media categories dropped by 11% to US\$1.6 billion, broadcasters remain optimistic. Many toycos have managed to improve their results in the last couple of quarters, notes DIC's VP of advertising sales and marketing, David Danowski. He foresees toycos "being more conservative with their spending initially, and then coming in later and putting more money towards very targeted campaigns."

Finally, it looks like the upfront itself may be diminishing in importance as ad spend is increasingly being spread throughout the year and in scatter markets. For their part, network ad execs are adapting to the new year-round sales environment. "Kids was probably one of the first sectors to take this route because children watch a lot of programming in the summer when adults watch less TV," says Sandy Wax, president and GM of PBS Kids Sprout. Nick's Perry says significant spending still occurs during the upfront, but acknowledges that a year-round buying market is evolving because of the burgeoning digital and online extensions that take more time to plan and execute.

## Nick plans an online hit, courts digital ad buys

Riding on its biggest-ever investment from parentco Viacom, the number-one kids cablenet is looking to build a strong ad base in digital media by ramping up its multimedia programming with new interactive shows that incorporate kid-generated content.

A standout in connecting the linear and digital environments, *iCarly* is a new live-action show-within-a-show featuring host Carly, who gives kids specific assignments to create and post their own original content online. The audience creations then have a chance at being scripted into a future episode or becoming part of Carly's webcast.

The show joins Nick's other digi-themed offerings, including ME:TV, a live afternoon block featuring original kid-generated content, as well as virtual world Nicktropolis and broadband video platform TurboNick 2.0. February 2007 stats show Nicktropolis attracted a million unique kid visitors, and TurboNick 2.0 had more than 77 million streams, up 511% from February 2006.

Perry expects the shows and online environments to attract new ad partners in the computer, electronics and wireless categories. He estimates the ad spend supporting digital initiatives will be upwards of 10% of the net's total take this year. Already, Nick has signed on tween-targeted wireless phone company Kajeet to feature Nick content, ringtones and wallpapers on its phones, in return for advertising on the network.

Unique to Nickelodeon's annual model is the 20-year-old Kids' Choice Awards, which has turned into a major ad spending event in its own right. The show had its biggest audience ever this past March 31, doubling its previous sponsor list and, significantly, inking major deals with non-endemic sponsors Wal-Mart and KIA Motors. Perry says the awards show was

the backbone of the KIA deal, in particular, as the automobile company was eager to target parents watching the show with their kids. He says kid influence over family life continues to grow and attract ad spending from travel, automotive, retail and food categories.

## Disney debuts a new slate and targets parents

Disney Channel is coming off a banner year and giving rival Nick a run for its money. According to Nielsen Q4 '06 figures, the net gained 4.7 ratings points overall last year and now has 31.2 share of kids two to 11—just a few points behind Nick's 34.0 share. So the plan on the ad side revolves around broadening its multi-platform approach. And a new centralized sales force under Tricia Wilber, EVP of the media and advertising group, is now poised to offer advertisers streamlined campaigns across television, radio, online and print.

Wilber says the strong input kids continue to have on household purchases has sweetened the pot for potential deals with automotive, retail and wireless advertisers banking on Disney's family viewing patterns. To strengthen that bond with parents, the company recently unveiled its new DisneyFamily.com website in a bid to expand its reach with moms, in particular.

The channel also continues to pursue greater online engagement with kids. Since relaunching in January, Disney.com now streams an average of 100 million videos per week. Look for The Disney Channel Games competition to become a pillar for multi-platform ad opps. It's scheduled to roll out this summer as two half-hour TV specials, a weekly short-form program and an interactive online event with extensions on Radio Disney.

In the meantime, sequels of highly rated original TV movies are providing a lot of the programming in the coming year, including *High School Musical II*, *Cheetah Girls 3*, *Twitches Too* and *Johnny Kapahala: Back on Board*, the successor to *Johnny Tsunami*.

Also new to Disney's Saturday morning block on ABC are live-action laughers *Cory in the House* (which is a spin-off from *That's So Raven*) and *Wizards*, which will also bow on Disney Channel. Meanwhile, new animated series that will target a core kids audience on Disney Channel include comedies *Phineas and Ferb*, *Dadnapped* and *Franklin B.C.*



**CN newcomer Chowder features the comic tales of a gluttonous chef-in-training**

## Cartoon Network works on wireless

Cartoon is continuing its push into the digital space on the heels of last year's broadband additions Toonami Jetstream and Cartoon Network Video, which together now pump out 20 million video streams per month. John O'Hara, SVP of advertising sales, says those digital entities and cable VOD service Cartoon Network On Demand are facilitating cross-platform buys for advertisers looking to embrace digital.

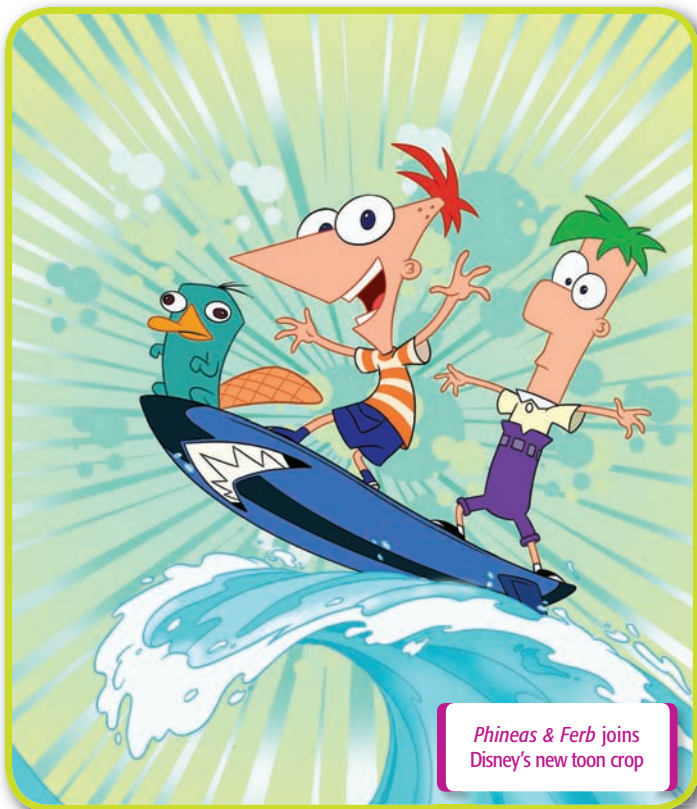
O'Hara is aiming to expand his non-traditional ad buys and has automotive, retail and insurance advertisers in sight. He adds that the net has made strides in the scatter market over the last three quarters. Also, it's no secret that boys make up CN's strongest viewership component, and the net will work with partners to capitalize on that strength across all platforms.

Also on deck is a TV spin-off of the net's original live-action/toon movie *Re-Animated*.

Finally, CN has 662 new episodes of existing shows, 24 new premiere specials and movies, several special-event promotions, online talent search *Props* and the premiere of a *Ben 10* live-action movie in the hopper.

## Discovery Kids lures parents with cross-platform series

Already a popular choice among girls and aspiring to endear itself even more to parents, Discovery Kids has set the stage for more cross-platform ad buys by centralizing the direction of Discovery's integrated media group, which also includes adult channel Animal Planet. In addition to her role as president and GM of Animal Planet Media and Discovery Kids Media, in which she oversees



New this year is Call Toons, an interactive application where users can jazz up their mobile phones with CN characters and ring-tones. Though the initiative isn't set up for ad sales at this point, O'Hara says the product is going to help push the brand and its characters further into the wireless space.

As for stoking advertiser and viewer interest in the traditional broadcast platform, CN is trying out five new series this year, including *Santo*, starring a 2-D animated version of real-life wrestling hero Santo El Enmascarado de Plata; *Chowder*, a comedy about a zany aspiring chef; *The Secret Saturdays*, which chronicles a family of super scientists; and a show about a boy living inside a whale called *The Marvelous Misadventures of Flapjack*.

Discovery Kids and [discoverykids.com](http://discoverykids.com), Marjorie Kaplan has also taken the helm at Animal Planet Media Enterprises.

In June, Discovery Kids is debuting *Bindi: The Jungle Girl*, a weekly wildlife series starring the late Steve Irwin's precocious eight-year-old daughter. The show will direct kids online to Bindi's Blog, where Bindi herself will offer more content and answer questions. The cablenet also intends to make a direct connection with adults when Animal Planet airs *My Daddy the Croc Hunter* (a behind-the-scenes look at Bindi's life with her famous dad) the night before her show bows on Discovery Kids.

Also straddling the kids and adult platforms is *The Future is Wild*, a new show for Discovery Kids based on the adult series that



imagines which species of animals will populate the Earth in the future. Kaplan says it's wide open for licensing opportunities.

## Sprout brands for family bonding

Coming up on its second upfront season, PBS Kids Sprout's number-one priority is still building advertiser and viewer awareness. The preschool channel is launching a major branding initiative called "We Share" through consumer and trade publications, outdoor displays and on television across 90 PBS affiliates. The campaign is meant to reflect the lives of families and encourage simple moments that can be shared, such as eating dinner, doing crafts or curling up together on the couch to watch TV.

A focus on parent-targeted advertising is still core to the new kidnet's commercial strategy. And Wax says the channel has

On the digital front, Wax says her team is going to ramp up its website's user-generated content offerings to get parents and kids interacting with Sprout. "The child is sitting there with the parent and there's an opportunity to provide the child a chance to play and give the parents some tips and ideas," says Wax. She sees the site as a key link into the home, and plans to use the platform to encourage kids and families to communicate with Sprout's team.

## Kids' WB! takes its action-adventure stronghold online

Superheroes still rule the roost on Saturday mornings at Kids' WB!, which boasts six of the top 10 shows watched by kids two to 11 on terrestrial TV.

And Saturday morning cartoons remain a big draw with kids, says Rob Tuck, EVP of sales and planning at Kids' WB!, adding



expanded its advertising base on that front in the last year, landing buys from entertainment, home video, automotive, travel and insurance companies. In the coming year, consumer electronics and retail are two of the key categories she's working on building.

The lion's share of Sprout's ad business right now centers around its on-demand/VOD component, which generated more than 10 million views on Comcast in 2006, averaging 13 to 14 million views per month. Though Wax remains tight-lipped about new Sprout programming rolling out over the course of the year, she did say there will be a focus on interstitials and shorts to complement the network's lineup of well-known series such as *Sesame Street* and *Bob the Builder*.

that despite cable's dominance, there remains a strong market for terrestrial TV in the US. In fact, approximately 13% of American kids ages six to 11 don't have access to cable at all.

Besides launching the new Spider-Man animated series, the net is debuting four shows that pack in comedy and action and also incorporate a substantial online component. *Magi Nation*, bowing this fall, is a multi-platform 2-D animated series based on a trading card game that kids can access online to experience more character adventures.

*World of Quest*, *Eon Kid* and *Will & Dewitt* are also filled with laughs and based on fantastical adventures the net hopes will turn kids on. And

"Screen to screen" continued on page 31

# LOOK WHO'S WATCHING

## A snapshot of the US kids TV audience

**R**atings measuring the viewing habits of America's 73 million kids under age 17—and especially its 40 million two- to 11-year-olds—are ultimately the currency that drives the annual kids advertising upfront. And one of the key industry measurement tools is MAGNA Global's yearly Q4 report, *Television Viewing Among Kids*, which analyzes Nielsen kids audience data. We've taken an in-depth look at the new Q4 2006 report, and what follows is a clear snapshot of the current kids viewing landscape in the US.

First off, Lisa Quan, author of the study, notes that despite the supposed hubbub over the impact of online video on traditional TV viewing, kids ages two to 11 are watching more TV now than they did five years ago; the study shows kids in this age bracket watched 15 minutes more TV per week in Q4 2006 than they did the previous year. And girls two to 11 and six to 11 spent more time watching kid-targeted programs than ever before at 8.5 hours per week.

That said, it's worth highlighting that US kids watch almost as many hours of non-kids (think *American Idol*) programming per week as they do shows specifically made for them. Additionally, even though a full 13% of kids ages six to 11 don't have access to cable, the average time the two to 11 and six to 11 brackets spent viewing terrestrial networks continued to slide in Q4 '06; it now stands at less than 15 minutes per week. Such stats don't bode well for the network Saturday morning blocks, where newcomers like DIC and Qubo have entered the fray to fight for eyeballs and advertising dollars.

However, Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. remains the strongest-performing daypart when it comes to kid viewers, garnering a 27.0 audience share (the closest runner-up is the weekday prime-time slot with a 19.2 share). Within that period, the hour from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. attracts the biggest audience, and the three major kidnets tend to run back-to-back eps of their highest-ranked shows then.

As for what US kids are watching on Saturday mornings, it can be summed up in one word: Nickelodeon. The number-one kids broadcaster's series hold down the top nine

*Battle Frontier* and newcomer *Robotboy* ended up in 24th and 25th, respectively.

Disney Channel, in fact, came on quite strong in '06, and in this year's report seems

### Hours 2 to 11s spend watching kids & non-kids programming per week

	Kids	Non-kids	All
<b>2005</b>			
Network	.32	1.99	2.31
Ad-supported cable	8.31	5.44	13.74
Syndication	0.02	1.11	1.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.65</b>	<b>8.53</b>	<b>17.18</b>
<b>2006</b>			
Network	0.20	1.86	2.06
Ad-supported cable	8.54	5.68	14.22
Syndication	0.02	1.05	1.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.75</b>	<b>8.59</b>	<b>17.34</b>

Source: MAGNA Global analysis of copyrighted Nielsen Media Research data  
No specials; no breakouts; no less than three telecasts; Sat. 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### The Saturday Morning Top 10

	Net	Time	Kids 2-11	Boys 2-11	Girls 2-11
<b>1. SpongeBob</b>	Nick	9:30	5.70	5.81	5.59
<b>2. SpongeBob</b>	Nick	9:00	5.29	5.45	5.12
<b>3. Fairly Odd Parents</b>	Nick	10:00	5.15	5.26	5.04
<b>4. Fairly Odd Parents</b>	Nick	10:30	4.86	4.91	4.81
<b>5. Jimmy Neutron</b>	Nick	8:30	4.42	4.75	4.07
<b>6. Mr. Meaty</b>	Nick	10:30	4.02	4.27	3.75
<b>7. Avatar</b>	Nick	11:00	4.00	4.21	3.77
<b>8. Avatar</b>	Nick	11:30	3.93	4.52	3.31
<b>9. Jimmy Neutron</b>	Nick	8:00	3.48	3.68	3.26
<b>10. Mickey Mouse Clubhouse</b>	Disney	9:30	3.42	2.99	3.87

Source: MAGNA Global analysis of copyrighted Nielsen Media Research data

spots with viewers ages two to 11 during this daypart. And the top 20 spots are dominated by Nick and Disney Channel, while third-ranked Cartoon Network's best performers *Pokémon*:

to be giving Nick a run for its money. Nick maintains its top position, thanks to the strength of gender-neutral shows such as *SpongeBob SquarePants* and the fact that



## Saturday Morning ratings (kids 2-11)—All kids telecasts

	Q4/02	Q4/03	Q4/04	Q4/05	Q4/06
Nick	4.36	4.41	3.92	3.62	3.81
Disney	1.57	1.98	1.93	2.07	2.66
Cartoon	1.95	1.95	2.30	2.29	1.93
Kids WB!	3.90	3.06	2.09	1.79	1.47
ABC	1.73	1.57	1.39	1.38	1.27
Fox (now 4Kids TV)	1.18	1.25	1.02	1.22	0.90
NBC (Disc. Kids to Qubo Q4/06)	0.62	0.69	0.60	0.59	0.85
CBS (Nick Jr to DIC in Q4/06)	1.60	1.39	1.34	1.38	0.61
Noggin	--	0.23	0.27	0.38	0.57
Toon Disney	0.27	0.25	0.37	0.38	0.34
Nicktoons	--	--	0.08	0.14	0.15

Source: MAGNA Global analysis of copyrighted Nielsen Media Research data for Sept. to Dec. each year  
 Note: Kids programs are all programs Nielsen designates with kids program types; non-kids includes all other programs across all dayparts, including specials. To convert ratings into the actual number of kids watching, divide by 100 and multiply by total universe size (approximately 40 million for kids ages two to 11).

it benefits from the highest TV household penetration (82.4%) of the big three. But Disney's jump in girl viewers drawn to live-action tween hits such as *Hannah Montana* and *The Suite Life of Zack & Cody*—which rate particularly well during the weekday after-school and prime-time dayparts—has pushed its overall point share from 26.5 in Q4 2005 to 31.2 in Q4 2006; it now sits only a few points behind Nick's 34.0. In prime-time kids program rankings, for example, *The Suite Life of Zack & Cody* and *Hannah Montana* easily dominated the top two spots with shares of 4.97 and 4.27 with kids two to 11, and those numbers jumped to 6.93 and 6.07 with girls two to 11. **LC**

### "Screen to screen" continued from page 29

as the new shows have strong built-in online components, Kids' WB! intends to take advantage and ramp up its offering of online games. Each new series will get its own game, says Dana Cluverius, VP of programming and scheduling.

Though Kids' WB! skews primarily boy, Tuck says classic comedies like *Shaggy & Scooby-Doo Get a Clue* and *Tom & Jerry*, which it took on last year, help it stay competitive with girls.

### DIC reaches out to boys amid block revamp

DIC, which focused on its Saturday morning Secret Slumber Party block for girls on CBS last year, is now looking to add some boy-targeted programming and undertake a refresh for fall '07. Danowski says the net is bringing on DIC production *I Was a High School Dinosaur* (working title) and American Greetings Properties' *Sushi Pack*, a 2-D animated action/comedy about a group of crime-fighting sushi, to lure boy viewers to the channel.

"We've learned going into year two that it's really important to speak to both boys and girls and not be exclusive," says Danowski.

Boy titles aside, Danowski says DIC still has plans to expand on the Secret Slumber Party concept and is continuing its effort with Geffen Records to launch hosts The Slumber Party Girls as a musical group in its own right. New eps of DIC's *Cake* and *Horseland* are in the works, and both properties have products launching in the fall. DIC will also premiere a *Strawberry Shortcake* TV series with AGP.

Interstitials about healthy eating, fitness and self-esteem have also been rolled into the programming throughout the morning,

and The Girls are set to host a magazine-style series tentatively titled *Everything KEWL*. The show is part of DIC and Geffen's new KEWL brand, which features a tween-targeted celebrity- and music-driven print magazine and website.

Danowski says his primary sales objective has been securing traditional kids ad buyers, but he is also talking to non-traditional categories and getting more retailers involved.

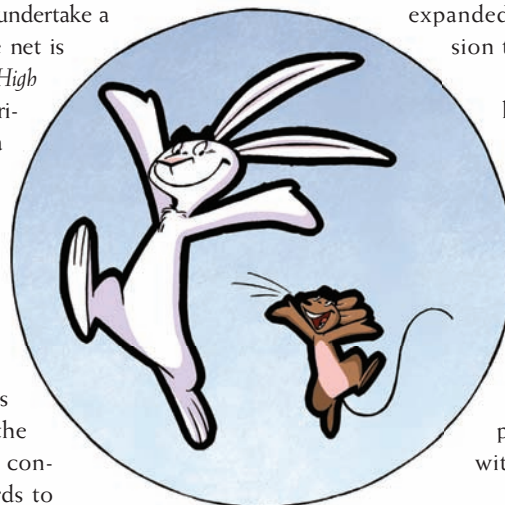
### Qubo gears up with original programs and a Brit classic

Newcomer Qubo, which took over the NBC Saturday morning block vacated by Discovery Kids last fall and which also occupies weekend mornings on Telemundo, recently expanded its digital broadcast day on ION Television to 24 hours.

Heading into its first upfront, the net is launching new series from two of its three content partners and adding new eps to existing shows. Entertainment Rights' UK classic *Postman Pat* is scheduled to bow this fall, and Nelvana's *My Friend Rabbit* will be the channel's first exclusive original production. President and GM Rick Rodriguez says Qubo will also be working closely with its third content partner, Scholastic, to bring literacy-based programming to air, as well as collaborating with its *Parent and Child* magazine.

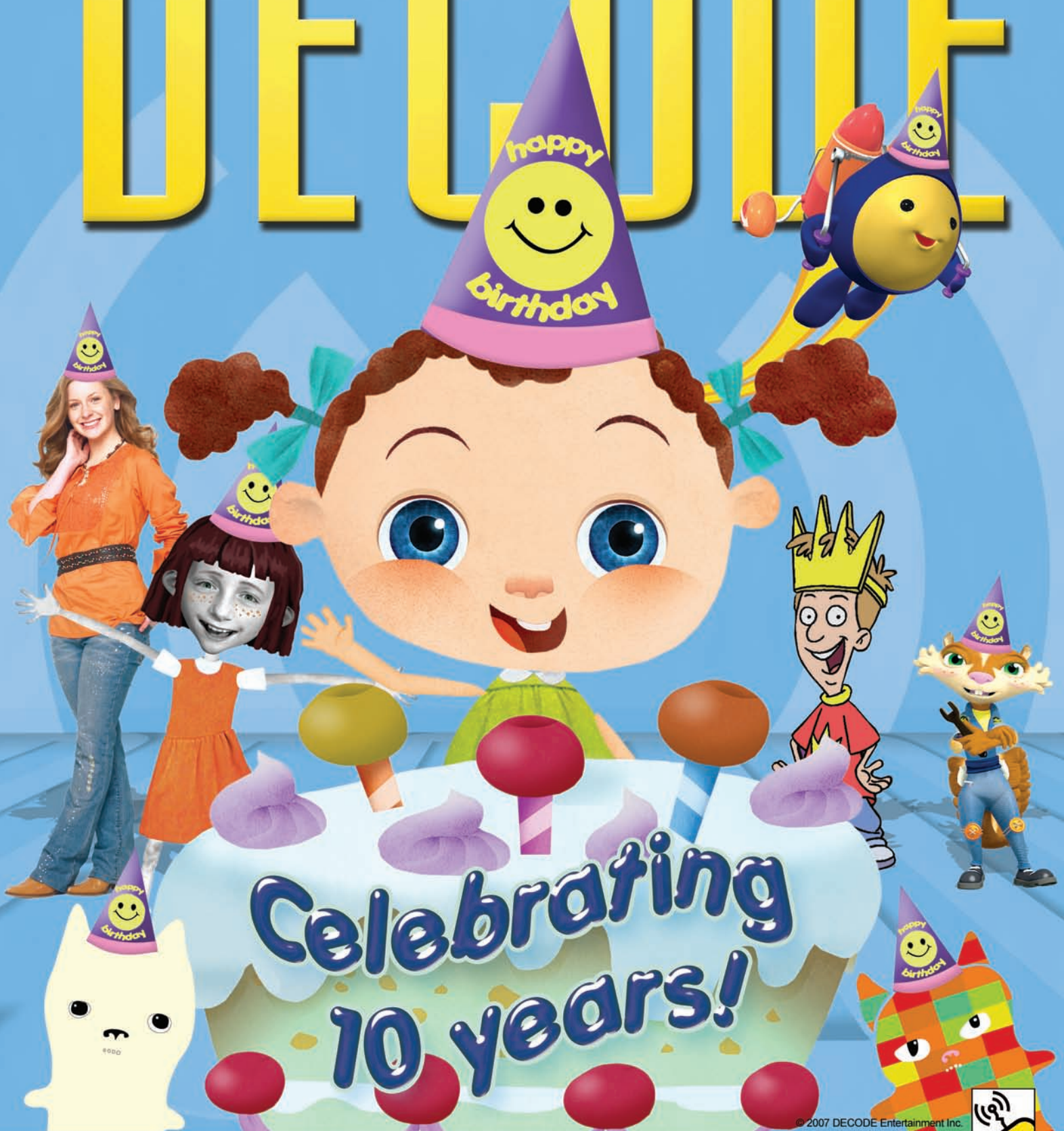
Rodriguez and Kerry Hughes, SVP of advertising sales and sponsorship, say the focus on family co-viewing and literacy will help bring in advertisers looking to reach

moms and adults ages 18 to 39, and to that end, they expect about 40% of ad buys to come from non-traditional kids advertisers, pointing to packaged goods, apparel and retail as having particularly strong potential. **S**



*My Friend Rabbit* is Qubo's first original production

# DECODE



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# DECODING DECODE'S DECADE OF SUCCESS

BY KATH STEWART

**I**t all started in October, 1996 over dinner aboard the Jim Henson Company's charter yacht at MIPCOM. Steven DeNure came over to Cannes as a consultant for his former employers at Alliance Communications, where he had been president of Alliance Productions. Angus Fletcher, then president of Jim Henson Production's European arm, welcomed DeNure on the company boat in exchange for what he joked was "general washing up duties and sales of Duty Free." UK-based Neil Court was also on board acting as a consultant for Henson, one of his key clients since he quit his stint as founding managing director of Nelvana Enterprises. DeNure and Court discovered that they had independently been hatching the same idea: to create a new production and distribution company that would be content, not volume, driven. Finding that they shared a vision, had complementary skills, and believing the

time was right, Court and DeNure decided by the end of the dinner to launch a new company. With the addition of partners John Delmage and Beth Stevenson, Decode was launched in April of 1997.

"Secretly, I think Neil just wanted to have his own boat," Fletcher says. Fletcher remains a close friend and coproducer, having partnered on Decode's biggest coproduction to date, *THE HOOBS*.

Toronto's Decode has since grown to not only have its own chartered yacht in Cannes but to also mark its 10th anniversary this year as a top international kids production and distribution house. What makes this more impressive is the competition this newcomer faced in 1997. Companies such as Cinar, EM.TV and Nelvana were producing large volumes of kids product and making it very difficult for an upstart

## "Kids are more pliable and they're the best testing ground for innovative material and how they use content"

like Decode to make waves in a flooded industry. Yet a decision to produce a diverse range of programs and explore different animation styles (facilitated by not owning a studio) helped Decode emerge victorious. "When we started, our competitors at the time were focused on growing volume," says Court. "We thought that by focusing on creating distinctive shows instead, we'd be a much more user friendly supplier for broadcasters."

As per the Decode philosophy of supplying the industry with distinctive shows that don't compete with each other, the



**THE HOOBBS: 250 episodes x 22 minutes**

© The Jim Henson Company Limited/DECODE Entertainment Inc., 2001 A U.K./Canada co-production.

34

# A TOAST TO DECODE ON 10 YEARS IN THE BUSINESS.

**TELETOON.COM**





company took time with its inaugural projects. Beth Stevenson says it took Decode three or four years before it dipped its toe into the preschool pool. Broadcasters were saying there was no room, and proven producers in the genre quickly filled any space that emerged for the youngest TV audience. But the Decode team creatively found a possible entry point.

"We were asking broadcasters what they wanted and they said anything but preschool, so we came back and thought, well, if that's what they're telling everyone, then perhaps no one is making it," DeNure says. And at a time when preschool was classic and 2-D, Decode broke the mold by pitching two CGI properties from its roster that had broadcasters suddenly making room in their previously closed schedules: Save 'Ums and Franny's Feet.

"CGI is just a tool, and it's now become the dominant form of animation production as expertise has grown worldwide and as costs have come down," Court says. Of course, as Decode made a name for itself in the industry, so too came pitches from new producers. Court says the team was once presented with a kids animated series where different animals were dressed in police uniforms. One character was blind, the other in a wheelchair,



**FRANNY'S FEET: 78 episodes x 11 minutes**  
©2003 DECODE/Franny Productions Inc.



The Latest Buzz



Naturally, Sadie



Radio Free Roscoe



Franny's Feet



King

**DECODE Entertainment... no longer a kid, not quite a teen.**

**Happy 10th and congratulations from  
your friends at Family Channel!**





**THE SAVE-UMS: 78 episodes x 11 minutes**

Ka-Chung, Custard, Noodle, Jazzi and Foo © 2004 DECODE/Save-Ums Productions 2 Inc.

and a squirrel who was obviously mentally challenged. “The producer thought it was really PC so it would sell in the States,” he says. “They called it *The Handicaps* – get it? Priceless!”

Fortunately, the creative team managed to find more workable products that not only worked in the U.S., but internationally. With preschool programming established and kid-targeted animation such as *Angela Anaconda* becoming an early international success and establishing Decode's reputation for innovation, the company's evolution into live action programming seemed a natural step.

Yet moving beyond animation wasn't an easy task in an industry more familiar with Decode as a toon shop. "Even though Steven had 11 years of putting together some of the

most important live-action shows ever seen in Canada, and I had a history in primetime and John Delmage had a much longer history of producing live action, people were like, Decode? Live action?" Stevenson says.

The international community realized Decode found its sea legs in live action when tween-targeted series such as *The Zack Files*, *Naturally Sadie* and *Radio Free Roscoe* started to pick up key international broadcasting slots on channels like Disney, Noggin and ZDF. Together with partner, John Delmage, DeNure and Stevenson lured many of the people they had worked with in the primetime sector to develop a new level of creative influences to the kids live action genre. “People hadn’t done that before because it used to be people who had worked



**10th ANNIVERSARY**  
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10 years of first-class entertainment





# DECODE CELEBRATES ITS 10TH BIRTHDAY.

FRANNY'S FEET



GIRL STUFF BOY STUFF



RADIO FREE ROSCOE



KING



PLANET SKETCH



NAUGHTY NAUGHTY PETS



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Kirk Thompson



Diane Konecny



June Nayler

**Congratulations Decode  
on your 10th Anniversary  
from the kids at Jones Brown**



Damian Schleifer



Marjorie Denny



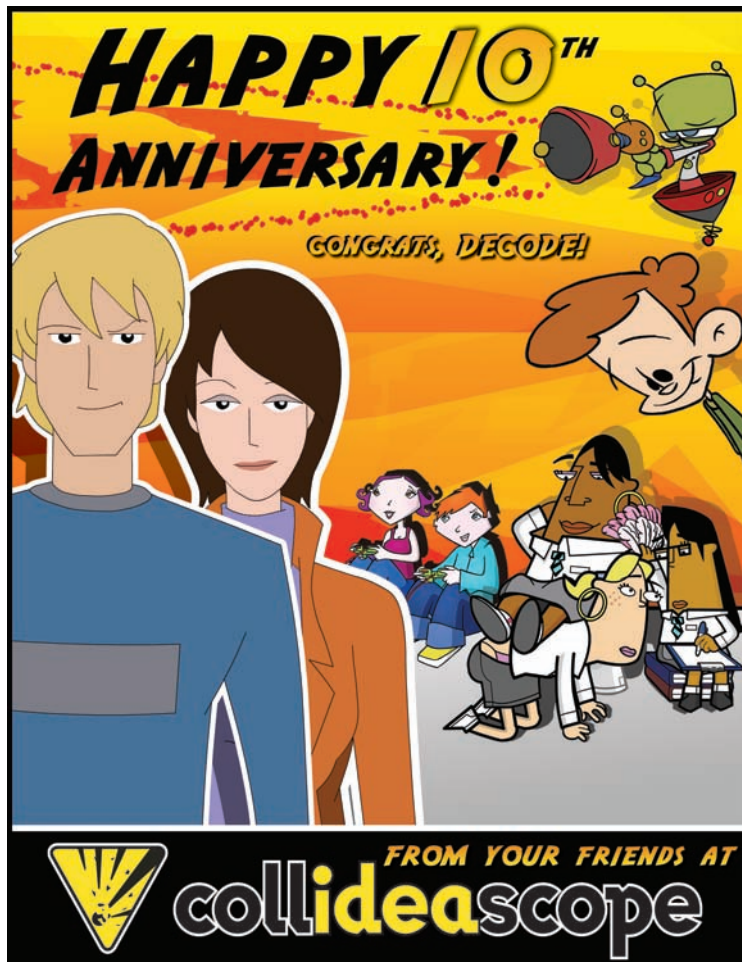
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# Congratulations!

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**NATURALLY SADIE: 65 episodes x 22 minutes**

Charlotte Arnold as budding naturalist, Sadie Hawthorne

© 2005 DECODE/Sadie Productions 2 Inc

in other areas of kids or teen production, but we looked outside of that pool,” Stevenson says.

While most decade-old production companies have only recently dived into creating an interactive division, Decode started to build websites for its programming before broadband was widespread. “In fact, convincing broadcasters they should not just take our websites or our characters for their own sites but buy them was an interesting first step,” DeNure says, adding broadcasters today wouldn’t even think about picking up a show without first thinking about the online component.

And speaking of Decode’s clients, it’s a more competitive world not only from the number of kids cablesat channels but also new screens such as mobile, iPods and gaming. Court says Decode has responded to this challenge by upping the offer of its non-broadcast content of its shows.

Stevenson says Decode’s next step is exploring interactive play with portable devices. The content can now be bigger and better because kids can download faster and on different handhelds. “Kids are more pliable and they’re the best testing ground for innovative material and how they use content,” she says. “We’re super excited because the screens are more prolific and they can go into new and interesting places.”

And one place Decode has broken through is on the TV screens with Dudson’s Modern Tales in Toronto’s subway

**“Even though Steven had 11 years of putting together some of the most important live action shows ever seen in Canada, and I had a history in primetime, people were like, Decode? Live action?”**

39



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www.astralmedia.com/thefund www.reelsupport.ca



**RADIO FREE ROSCOE: 52 episodes x 22 minutes**

Nathan Stevenson, Nathan Carter, Ali Mukaddam and Kate Todd as underground radio DJs, Robbie, Travis, Ray and Lily  
© 2003 DECODE/Nutley Productions Inc.

system, the TTC. There are also opportunities to expand existing properties into new areas, such as a merchandising and licensing program for Franny's Feet, which Court says has the ability to transform Decode. "Signing a worldwide deal with Hasbro for Franny's Feet is a huge deal for us, as it creates the base for a worldwide M&L programme."

Evolving the business also led Decode to merge with Halifax Film last year under the banner of a new holding company, DHX Media. DeNure says they looked at the options to attract outside capital, which included selling the company, but there was a meeting of the minds with Halifax. Just as Decode's shows don't compete with each other,

## NEIL'S BEST CANNES STORY

A bunch of us were out late one night on the sea side of the Croisette in Cannes -- wee hours of the morning. I was talking a bit loudly and suddenly, from high up in one of the hotels, a voice rang out, "shut up, Neil!" You know that you've been around a long time if someone can pick out your voice in the dark like that!

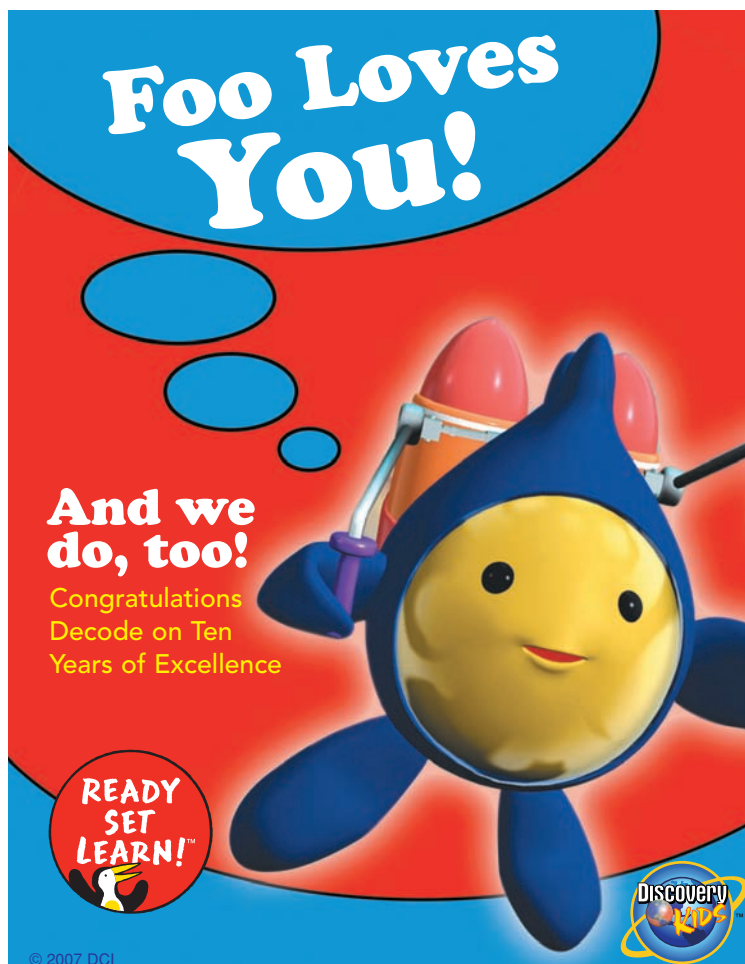
40

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# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Congratulations on the 10th anniversary  
of Decode Entertainment  
from all of us at Super RTL



**super**  
RTL



The Don Juan Yacht

each partner's catalogue is complementary. Most importantly, as a parent company, DHX lets its subsidiaries work autonomously. In so doing, each prodco is expanding internally not just through kids programming but through comedy, film, M&L and potential acquisitions. With DeNure and Court both on the DHX board, the Decode founders are very involved with the strategy and direction of the new entity.

While it is the company's product that leads its success, it's also the people who run the ship, especially on Decode's rented yacht in Cannes. "Who else but Neil Court could get everyone together on a boat, singing and dancing. I suspect it's a very serious business strategy," says Deirdre Brennan, programming director at Nick Australia.

Perhaps not a strategy, but Court says life is too short not to take calculated risks, or waste time with unnecessarily difficult people.

"A company likes ours doesn't succeed without support from a lot of talented people, and we think we have some of the best in the business," says Court. It's key executives like Anne Loi (Senior VP, Finance and Operations) and Dominique Bazay (VP, Distribution) who should get as much credit as Steven, Beth, John and I do for building Decode, not to mention a lot of incredibly dedicated people in production and in other parts of the company."

**congratulation to DECODE  
on their 10th Anniversary!**



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**Pop!Town**  
Created and illustrated by JUN ICHIHARA  
©olc/rights entertainment(Japan) Inc. 2004





## in new jobs



Anne Gates



Howard Litton



Susan McLain



Sylvia Schmoeller



Andrea Sobel

**Cartoon Network Europe** (London, England, 44-207-693-1005): Rubber-stamping a promotion that's been in effect informally for a few months already, **Daniel Lennard** has been bumped up from director of original animation to VP of original series and development. The move puts Lennard squarely in charge of a development studio that CNE launched in Q1 this year, as well as a team that includes six artists and various contracted production staffers.

**Disney Consumer Products** (Burbank, California, 818-560-1000): **Anne Gates** is calling the shots across the pond these days as EVP and MD of DCP Europe. Although she's still working on relocating her family to London, Gates has already stepped in to oversee licensing, retail, sales and marketing activities, as well as coordinating with Disney Stores Europe to get the most possible in-store exposure for her merch programs. Prior to the promotion, Gates served as EVP of DCP in the US.

In other subsidiary news, **Susan McLain** has taken up the reins at The Baby Einstein Company as VP and GM. McLain demonstrated a strong passion for the brand in her previous position as VP of Buena Vista Home Entertainment Marketing for North America, synching up with Disney Consumer Products to significantly expand and coordinate the brand's presence at retail and championing the Little Einsteins spin-off property.

**MarVista Entertainment** (Los Angeles, California, 310-737-0950): After churning out 200 additional hours of programming last year, MarVista is bulking up a bit to handle even more output in 2007. The company's sales team is the latest unit to grow, with **Beatrice McMillan** and **Vanessa Goglio** both coming in as VP of sales. McMillan, who is coming off a stint as VP of sales and licensing for classic TV and film distributor SOFA Entertainment, will handle territories including Germany, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico and Brazil. Goglio, meanwhile, will put the skills and contacts she built up as director of worldwide pay TV at Sony Pictures International Television to work for MarVista in regions such as France, Italy, Japan and Scandinavia.

**Nickelodeon UK** (London, England, 44-207-462-1000): In the wake of **David Lynn** moving up and over into a new position as MD of MTV Networks UK and Ireland, **Howard Litton** has stepped in to take

on the whole Nick UK enchilada, overseeing five TV channels, three websites, a mobile TV network and consumer products activities as SVP and MD.

**Razor & Tie** (New York, New York, 212-598-2200): In recognition of the work he put into broadening the Kidz Bop brand to include a CD series that has sold more than 10 million units, a live tour and a toy deal with Fisher-Price, R&T has upped **Kevin O'Connor** from senior director of children's entertainment to president of Kidz Bop.

**Sanrio** (Torrence, California, 310-523-1705): The house of Hello Kitty has recruited an experienced brand marketer whose fondness for the iconic girls franchise she'll largely be dealing with dates back to an HK rubber eraser she bought with her own pocket money as a kid. As VP of marketing, **Andrea Sobel** will head up brand and marketing strategies at Sanrio. The move marks a change of industry for Sobel, who recently left a director of licensing and business development role at skincare company Murad.

**Super RTL** (Köln, Germany, 49-22-191-550): Coming back to Germany after an eight-and-a-half-year stretch in Asia, where she held down programming and acquisitions positions at both Nick and Disney, **Sylvia Schmoeller** has joined the German kidnet as senior manager of acquisitions and co-productions.

**Target Entertainment** (London, England, 44-870-164-7474): With just 18 months under her belt at Target, **Hannah Worrall** has been promoted from senior sales manager to head of sales. In addition to selling the company's shows into French-speaking territories, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Africa, Worrall will now manage the London-based sales team.

**Toys 'R' Us** (Wayne, New Jersey, 973-617-3500): After 30 years with US department store chain Marshall Fields, where she masterminded a company-wide initiative to make the retailer over into a fashion destination, **Karen Dodge** has landed at TRU as chief merchandising officer. Nurturing vendor relations with toy manufacturers will be a major focus for Dodge, who oversaw a variety of fashion-related categories as SVP at Marshall Fields until 2003.



# How to reach

some of the key companies in this issue

## Axiom Design Collaborative

Culver City, California 310-202-1705  
www.axiomdc.com

## BIG Communications

Singapore 65-6836-7636  
www.bigcom.com.sg

## Cartoon Network

Atlanta, Georgia 404-885-2263  
www.cartoonnetwork.com

## Committee of Advertising Practice

London, England 44-207-492-2222  
www.cap.org.uk

## Corus Entertainment

Toronto, Canada 416-534-1191  
www.corusent.com

## Cookie Jar Group

Toronto, Canada 416-977-3238  
www.thecookiejarcompany.com

## DIC Entertainment

Burbank, California 818-955-5400  
www.dicentertainment.com

## Discovery Networks

Bethesda, Maryland 301-986-0444  
www.discovery.com

## Disney Channel

Burbank, California 818-569-7500  
www.disney.com

## Federal Trade Commission

Washington, DC 202-326-2222  
www.ftc.com

## Flying Bark Productions

Sydney, Australia 61-2-9519-1366  
www.flyingbark.com.au

## HIT Entertainment US

New York, New York 212-463-9623  
www.hitentertainment.com

## Hot Topic

Los Angeles, California 626-839-4681  
www.hottopic.com

## Hyperdesign

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 215-557-7776  
www.hyperdesign.com

## JAM Media

Dublin, Ireland 353-1-415-3484  
www.jammedia.ie

## KB Toys

Pittsfield, Massachusetts 413-496-3000  
www.kbtoys.com

## KidsCo

London, England 44-207-368-9133

## Kids' WB!

Burbank, California 818-954-6636  
www.kidswb.com

## K'Nex

Hatfield, Pennsylvania 215-997-7722  
www.knex.com

## MAGNA Global

New York, New York 917-542-7010  
www.magnaglobal.com

## Mattel

El Segundo, California 310-252-2000  
www.mattel.com

## Media Development Authority of Singapore

Singapore 65-6837-9757  
www.mda.gov.sg

## MGM

Los Angeles, California 310-449-3000  
www.mgm.com

## Miami Metrozoo

Miami, Florida 305-251-0400  
www.miamimetrozoo.com

## Mindshare

New York, New York 212-297-7000  
www.mindshareworld.com

## Nelvana Enterprises

Toronto, Canada 416-588-5571  
www.nelvana.com

## Nickelodeon

New York, New York 212-258-8000  
www.nick.com

## Ofcom

London, England 44-207-981-3000  
www.ofcom.org.uk

## Ohio Art

Bryan, Ohio 419-636-3141  
www.world-of-toys.com

## PBS Kids Sprout

New York, New York 646-352-2574  
www.sproutonline.com

## PlayNetwork

Redmond, Washington 888-567-7529  
www.playnetwork.com

## Pokémon USA

New York, New York 212-765-6000  
www.pokemon-usa.com

## PPF House

Toronto, Canada 416-531-4696  
www.ppfhouse.com

## QuantiSense

Washington, DC 866-880-4200  
www.quantisense.com

## Qubo

Los Angeles, California 310-234-2250  
www.qubo.com

## Sony Pictures Consumer Products

Culver City, California 310-244-4000  
www.spe.sony.com

## Spin Master

Toronto, Canada 416-364-6002  
www.spinmaster.com

## Thunderbird Films

Vancouver, Canada 604-983-3555  
www.thunderbirdfilms.net

## Zoo Atlanta

Atlanta, Georgia 404-624-5600  
www.zooatlanta.org





# Calendar of Events

L.A. Screenings	May 16-25	Los Angeles, CA	212-288-3933	www.videoageinternational.com	TV/Film
KidScreen West	May 14-15	Santa Monica, CA	416-408-2300 (Canada)	www.kidscreenwest.com	Lic/Mktg
Licensing in India	May 14-16	Bangalore, India	212-627-5828 (US)	www.licensinginindia.com	Licensing
Kid & Tweens Power	May 20-24	Lake Buena Vista, FL	212-885-2737	www.kidpowerx.com	Marketing
Youth Marketing Forum China	May 23-24	Shanghai, China	8621-5063-4538	www.kidpowerx.com	Marketing
Kids Youth Marketing Summit Middle East	May 27-30	Dubai, UAE	971-4360-2800	www.kidpowerx.com	Marketing
Book Expo America	June 1-3	New York, NY	203-840-5614	www.bookexpoamerica.com	Publishing
Cartoon Master Finance	June 6-7	Munich, Germany	322-242-9353 (Belgium)	www.cartoon-media.be	Animation
nextMEDIA: The Future of Digital Content	June 8-10	Banff, Canada	416-921-3171	www.futureofdigitalcontent.com	Multimedia
Book Expo Canada	June 8-11	Toronto, Canada	416-491-7565	www.reedexpo.ca/bookexpo	Publishing
Banff Television Festival	June 10-13	Banff, Canada	403-678-1216	www.bwtf.com	TV
SGMA Spring Market	June 11-13	Las Vegas, NV	202-775-1762	www.sgmamarkets.com	Sp/App
Annecy	June 11-16	Annecy, France	33-4-5010-0900	www.annecy.org	Animation
Promax/BDA	June 12-14	New York, NY	310-788-9600	www.promax.org/conferences	Mktg/MM
Licensing 2007 International	June 19-21	New York, NY	203-882-1300	www.licensingshow.com	Licensing
DISCOP	June 20-22	Budapest, Hungary	33-1-4229-3224 (France)	www.discop.com	TV/Prod/Prog/MM
ASTRA Marketplace	June 24-27	Las Vegas, NV	312-222-0986	www.astratoy.org	Toys/Games
PLATFORM International Animation Festival	June 25-30	Portland, OR	818-508-9186	www.platformfestival.com	Animation
Tokyo Toy Show	June 28-July 1	Tokyo, Japan	81-3-3829-2513	www.toys.or.jp	Toys/Games
Hong Kong Licensing Show	July 3-6	Hong Kong	852-183-0668	www.hklicensingshow.com	Licensing
Tokyo International Book Fair	July 5-8	Tokyo, Japan	81-3-3349-8507	www.reedexpo.com	Publishing
E3 Media and Business Summit	July 11-13	Los Angeles, CA	508-875-3976	www.e3expo.com	Inter/Games
NATPE TV Producers Boot Camp	July 25-27	Los Angeles, CA	310-453-4440	www.natpe.org/calendar	TV/Prod/Prog
Comic-Con	July 26-29	San Diego, CA	619-491-2475	www.comic-con.org	Publishing
SIGGRAPH 2007	Aug. 5-9	San Diego, CA	312-321-6830	www.siggraph.org	Inter/Anim/MM
GC - Games Convention	Aug. 23-26	Leipzig, Germany	212-974-8841 (US)	www.gc-germany.de	Inter/Games
ABC Kids Expo	Sep. 7-10	Las Vegas, NV	210-691-4848	www.abckidsexpo.com	Mktg/Merch
Promo Expo	Sep. 17-19	Chicago, IL	508-743-0105	www.promoexpo.com	Promotions
Cartoon Forum	Sep. 19-22	Girona, Spain	322-242-9343 (Belgium)	www.cartoon-media.be	TV/Anim
Ottawa International Animation Festival	Sep. 19-23	Ottawa, Canada	613-232-8769	www.ottawa.awn.com	Animation
Brand Licensing 2007	Oct. 2-3	London, England	44-208-987-0970	www.brandlicensingexpo.com	Licensing
MIPCOM Jr.	Oct. 6-7	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.mipcomjunior.com	TV/Prod/Prog
MIPCOM	Oct. 8-12	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.mipcom.com	TV/Prod/Prog
Fall Toy Preview	Oct. 9-12	Dallas, TX	212-675-1141	www.toy-tia.org/ftp	Toys/Games
Frankfurt Book Fair	Oct. 10-14	Frankfurt, Germany	49-69-210-2256	www.frankfurt-book-fair.com	Publishing
Sportel Monaco	Oct. 15-18	Monte Carlo, Monaco	201-869-4022 (US)	www.sportelmonaco.com	Licensing
Shanghai Toy Expo & Licensing Show	Oct. 17-19	Shanghai, China	8621-6217-7777	www.chinalicensingshow.com	Licensing
American Film Market	Oct. 31-Nov. 7	Los Angeles, CA	310-446-1000	www.ifta-online.org	Film
Cartoon Master Feature	Nov. 15-17	Potsdam, Germany	322-242-9353 (Belgium)	www.cartoon-media.be	Animation

## Industry Legend

Advertising-Ad  
Animation-Anim  
Apparel-App

Distribution-Dist  
Electronics-Elec  
Film-F

Games-Gam  
Home Entertainment-HE  
Interactive-Inter

Licensing-Lic  
Manufacturing-Mfg  
Marketing-Mktg

Merchandising-Merch  
Multimedia-MM  
Production-Prod

Promotion-Promo  
Programming-Prog  
Publishing-Pub

Sports-Sp  
Toys-T  
TV-TV

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# Coming next in KidScreen...

June 2007 Issue

Featuring our annual NY  
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Gary Caplan chats with Howard  
Roffman of Lucas Licensing

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**kidScreen**

## APPOINTMENT NOTICE



*KidScreen* Editor Jocelyn Christie is pleased to announce that we've added a new member to the magazine's editorial team.

Emily Claire Afan has joined the masthead as Staff Writer and has taken on the challenge of covering the fast-paced world of licensing and merchandising. The position is a perfect fit for Afan, who loves playthings of all kinds with a rare passion.

Afan is a recent graduate of Ryerson University's School of Journalism, and she worked briefly as a researcher for *Canadian Health* magazine before joining *KidScreen*.

She's keen to meet you all, so please feel free to introduce yourselves by email ([eafan@brunico.com](mailto:eafan@brunico.com)), phone (416-408-2300 ext. 232) or in person at Licensing Show next month.

*KidScreen* is published by Brunico Communications Ltd., which also publishes *RealScreen*, *Strategy*, *Playback* and *Boards* magazines.

**kidScreen**  
About reaching children through entertainment  
A Publication of Brunico Communications Ltd.  
[www.kidscreen.com](http://www.kidscreen.com)



## Do you have a virtual pet?

Boys 8 to 11 (256 kids)		Girls 8 to 11 (280 kids)	
Yes	43.4%	Yes	58.6%
No	56.6%	No	41.4%
Boys 12 to 15 (269 kids)		Girls 12 to 15 (266 kids)	
Yes	16.4%	Yes	23.3%
No	83.6%	No	76.7%



Girls prefer handheld and web pets like Tamagotchi (right) and NeoPets (below)



## What kind of virtual pet is it?

Boys 8 to 11 (102 kids)		Girls 8 to 11 (158 kids)	
Video game	38.2%	Handheld	45.6%
Handheld	33.3%	Video game	19.6%
Website	10.8%	Website	13.3%
Other	10.8%	Computer game	12.0%
Computer game	6.9%	Other	9.5%
Boys 12 to 15 (41 kids)		Girls 12 to 15 (61 kids)	
Video game	39.0%	Website	29.5%
Handheld	29.3%	Handheld	26.2%
Website	14.6%	Video game	26.2%
Other	9.8%	Computer game	11.5%
Computer game	7.3%	Other	6.6%

Research tidbits found in this feature are extracted from the February/March 2007 issue of KidSay's Trend Tracker, a syndicated study published five times a year that breaks down what's cool and what's not according to 1,000 American kids ages eight to 15. KidSay, an 11-year-old full-service kids market research firm, works with schools and youth organizations in hundreds of U.S. cities to collect and analyze data about trends emerging in the categories of entertainment, famous people/characters, internet, food/beverage, spending, toys and lifestyle. If you'd like more information about Trend Tracker, please contact Bob Reynolds by phone (866-273-8555/913-390-8110) or by e-mail (bob@kidsay.com).



# Reflecting the **BEST**



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